

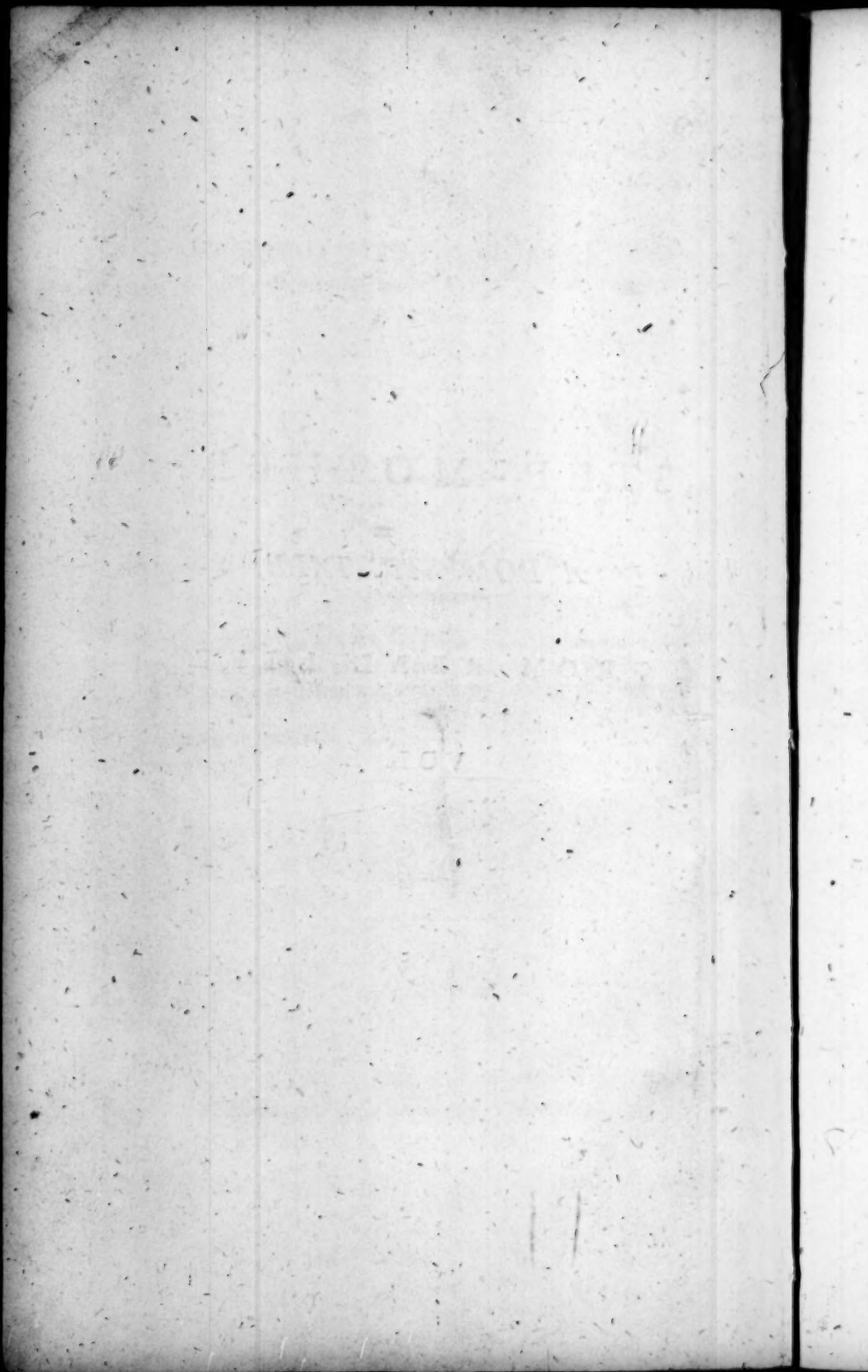
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THE
STEP-MOTHER:

A DOMESTIC TALE,

FROM REAL LIFE.

VOL. I.



THE
STEP-MOTHER;

A DOMESTIC TALE,

FROM REAL LIFE.

BY HELENA WELLS,
OF CHARLES TOWN, SOUTH-CAROLINA.

“Spirits are not finely touched but to fine issues, nor Nature
never lends the smallest scruple of her excellence; but,
like a thrifty goddess she determines herself the glory of
a creditor, both thanks and use.”

SHAKESPEARE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

THE 2nd EDITION.

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PREFACE

TO THIS EDITION.

FEELING the sincerest gratitude for the favourable reception given to my DOMESTIC TALE, I now offer another Edition to the Public, having, to the best of my judgment, sought to remedy the defects of the former.

That a second impression of a narrative so little adorned with incident, or embellished by intrigue, should thus early have been called for, is a convincing proof, that there are readers to be found willing to patronise the productions of those, whose aim, by pointing out the superior advantages resulting from a religious education, is to counteract the pernicious

nicious tendency of modern philosophy, and to check that taste for the marvellous and horrible, which carries the imagination to

“ Charnels, and the house of woe ;
“ To gothic churches, vaults, and tombs !
“ Of to some abbey’s mould’ring towers,”

WARTON.

a style of writing now so prevalent, as almost to deter from wielding the pen those who are desirous of delineating characters from *real life*, and of allotting to them stations, though difficult and arduous, yet making the sustaining of them with propriety, to be within the bounds of probability.

From what has been said, I trust no person will imagine that I have even a remote intention of derogating from the merits of the lady who has excited almost universal admiration, by her unrivalled manner of rivetting the
at-

attention, and gratifying the judgment as well as fancy of the reader, while pourtraying scenes, which in less skilful hands would have had a contrary effect.

I cannot however help wishing that the herd of feeble imitators of this elegant writer, were induced to turn to subjects more consonant to nature, than a detail of dark and mysterious transactions, such as those who live in the close of the eighteenth century, must be fully convinced could not in any civilized nation be permitted with impunity, or concerted with any probable views of success, even by the most determined villain. As a friend to the rising generation I should be anxious to keep from them such false views of society and manners. The avidity with which the young peruse fictitious recitals, gives to the labours
of

of the novelist an importance superior to what on any other account they would be entitled. On this ground I trust I may, without being convicted of presumption, hope, that in my future attempts as a writer, I may be as successful, as I am ardent in my zeal for promoting the cause of truth and virtue, having the honor to be, my readers

Much obliged,

And most obedient Servant,

HELENA WELLS:

London,
Feb. 6, 1799:

P R E F A C E.

WHILE the press is teeming with the productions of females, the success of whose former literary labours gives a merited currency to the pieces to which their names are prefixed, how shall the *bumble* essay of a *nameless individual*, who only undertakes to narrate a *Domestic Tale*, expect to find readers, except among that number of her own sex whose studies go not beyond the page of the novelist, and who, in their search for *something new*, may be induced to look into these volumes, though, from the title, with but few hopes of deriving much entertainment from their perusal?

It was a view of benefiting this class, added to a desire of recording the virtues of the amiable person whose exemplary

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a

conduct

conduct in an arduous situation called for such a testimony in her favour, which induced the writer to commit this trifle (the composition of which had beguiled many an anxious hour) to the tribunal that must now judge whether her temerity in so doing will not, in due time, receive its punishment.

To be equally indifferent to commendation or censure, would give no very favourable impression of the party who could, either in their own or a fictitious character, make such a declaration. The authoress of *The Step-mother* will thank the friendly critic who points out the errors of her first literary attempt, while she trusts to his candour for appreciating the motives by which she was actuated in becoming, with such slender pretensions, a candidate for fame.

In a seclusion from the world, after having partaken of its pleasures and its sorrows, those who have found the latter predominate, without losing the elasticity of mind which in early life was wont to
picture

picture scenes of future happiness, and which, when the glass is nearly half run out, are to be hoped for rather than expected, are sometimes irresistibly impelled to seek for consolation in the exercise of their pen, rather than in the perusal of the works of others.

While reading, too frequently the eye alone is employed : after hours of fruitless study, our immediate concerns are still predominant ; we almost trace them in every line, the beauties of the author scarcely engaging a momentary attention. in endeavouring to give our own ideas a "local habitation and a name," the sensibilities are awakened to a better purpose than the indulgence of unavailing retrospections.

This, then, candid reader, is my apology ; when thou also feelest that "hope deferred maketh the heart sick," think of the innocent means which may be devised to support disappointment, in preference to the many that are adopted by those
who

who have imbibed no taste for the pleasures of solitude, and as little relish for social intercourse, unless when it is sought at the splendid entertainments of the *rich* and *gay*.

May the 10th, 1798.

THE
STEP-MOTHER:
A DOMESTIC TALE.

CHAP. I.

“The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together: our virtues would be proud, if our faults whipped them not; and our crimes would despair, if they were not cherished by our virtues.”

SHAKESPEARE.

THE recital of my past life, which I have promised to give my sweet friend, will perhaps occasion her to shed some tears. My tale is simple; but few events to record, or brilliant incidents to adorn it. Whatever is interesting in it, to a heart formed like yours, would, by the generality of mankind, be deemed flat and insipid. It is not for them it is penned; nor would you have been mistress of my

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secret, if I had not known, that in your short journey you have already drank deeply of the waters of affliction. To divert your attention from your own sorrows, I permit you to weep for mine. Perhaps, in granting this, I shall weaken that profound respect which at present I know some part of my conduct has inspired: but can we feel ourselves mortal, and expect perfection on this side the grave?

Near the village of —, in a remote part of Wales, my parents lived. My father was a clergyman; and having, soon after taking orders, obtained a small living, he sat himself down contented on it, without breathing a wish for a removal to a more lucrative one. This disposition, I have heard him say, he was confirmed in by my mother, whose fondness for retirement and domestic pleasures made him think *his* humble fire-side the happiest on earth. When I came into the world, much joy was diffused through their peaceful dwelling; for though my mother had frequently been near meriting that title,
till

till now she had never borne a living child. From this circumstance, you will easily imagine how much the gift of a daughter was enhanced.

The years of infancy passed away with only another addition to their family—a son, three years younger than myself. When I was twelve years old, this beloved child was seized with a fever, which soon proved to be of the most malignant kind. Dreading the progress of the infection, I was sent from home. My mother thought not of herself: my father, absorbed in grief, was incapable of reflection. When he saw the eyes of his darling closed in death, and its pale, lifeless mother by his side, then was he roused. But, alas! it was too late! In a very short time he had nothing left to bind him to earth but her who now writes.

The first impressions of sorrow I had ever experienced was in quitting my mother. Young as I was, I had an idea of the danger of my brother; and though the good people to whose care I was committed took every pains to please me,

I wept without ceasing ; nor could I be pacified till they told me they had heard from the parsonage, and that my brother was better, and I should soon go home. After the recent deaths, it was proposed for me to remain some time where I was, fearing that upon a young mind, my father's melancholy, and the gloomy appearance of the house, might have too powerful an effect : but the stupor which seized him made my return absolutely necessary, in order to try the effect of my careffes. This was the last resource ; for since he had followed the corpse of my mother to the grave, he had scarcely taken any sustenance, nor had he shed a tear, or uttered a complaint. The recollection of the scene that followed my arrival at home, is even at this period of time strongly imprinted on my imagination.

You will have little difficulty in conceiving the terror that seized my heart, in viewing my father's pallid countenance, his sable garments, and dishevelled hair. The first glance made me exclaim——
“ Mamma ! my dear mamma ! where
are

are you?" This sound vibrated in his ears; he started, folded me in his arms, and wept profusely. This was exactly what his friends had hoped. "She lives in thee, my sweet Caroline!" he exclaimed, "From this moment thou art every thing to me. I will cherish thee for her sake."

The friend who accompanied me home remained some time in the house. When she left us, she cautioned me against ever mentioning my mother or brother's name; nor, indeed, was I very likely to do so, being conscious of the change produced on my father by it. In a little time his natural piety, and resignation to the Divine will, made him more calm; and the hours, not devoted to study, he assiduously employed in cultivating my mind. The few temptations I had to let my thoughts wander from what I was learning, made my progress more rapid than it could otherwise have been. To please my father was all I thought of, and that end could be attained in no way so effectually as by

a diligent attention to what he taught me.

More than two years passed in this manner, when I began to sigh for a companion of my own sex. During the winter, I heard the neighbours who visited my father talk of the great alterations that were making at Mistlewood, the seat of Sir Henry Glanvile, the family being expected to reside there the ensuing summer, for the first time since the present baronet's accession to the title and estate. I made no remark on this circumstance at the time : but when the month of June was almost at an end, I recollected it, and wondered when they would arrive. I was soon gratified with a sight of Lady Glanvile ; for the following Sunday Sir Henry and her ladyship made their appearance at church. When my father went up to them to pay his respects, her ladyship condescendingly inquired if I was not his daughter, and if he had any other children. " This is all that heaven has left me. When I last saw your ladyship, my wife
was—"

was--" He could add no more. Perceiving his embarrassment, she kindly took me by the hand, and with the most endearing condescension inquired after my health, hoping I was a good girl. I answered in the best manner I was able; though the awe which her presence inspired left me nearly as embarrassed as my father.

How ardently did I look forward to next Sunday! I dreaded their not coming to church, for I had observed our weekly visitors express some surprise at the fine London folks (as they called them,) taking the trouble to come there. When I heard the coach drive to the church door, how my heart palpitated! All the time of service I thought but of Lady Glanville; and though I tried to attend to my prayers, it was impossible.

Since the death of my mother, I had never seen any woman superior to the plain, homely farmers' wives of the neighbourhood. In their presence I felt, it is true, some kind of restraint; but my sensations, when Lady Glanville spoke to me, were of a very different nature.

After having mixed much with the world, and seen a variety of women, of as high rank as her ladyship, I still think there could not be a more commanding, nor, at the same time, a more prepossessing figure. At this period she might be about thirty, her height above the middle size, her eyes black and sparkling, and her complexion a clear brown, with a tincture of red in her cheeks, her teeth were white and even, and when she smiled, her countenance was loveliness itself. — In *my* eyes she appeared something more than human.

When we came out of church, she spoke to me with more familiarity than before; and at going away, said she would call at the parsonage in the course of the week.

If I was pleased at the merely *looking* at Lady Glanville, you will imagine the idea of the promised visit gratified me highly. I began to expect her on Monday after breakfast; but reasoned myself into the probability of her not coming till Tuesday, or perhaps the day after. On Thursday forenoon my patience was exhausted, and I was almost ready to burst into tears,
when

when the sound of horses' feet made me run to the window: I then saw Lady Glanville dismounting from her horse, having no equipage, only one servant attending her. I would have willingly fled out to welcome her approach, had not an involuntary respect withheld me. My father, having observed her from his study, was at the door to receive and usher her into the parlour.

After his thanking her for the honour conferred upon us, they talked on different subjects till she called me to her, and said I must tell her how I passed my time, and what I had learnt. My account of myself in some points exceeded her expectations; but of the accomplishments peculiar to the sex I knew nothing. Making my own linen was all I was mistress of, in regard to needlework; of music, drawing, or dancing, I had no idea.

"If Mr. Williams will give me leave," said she, "you shall not long want opportunities of instruction. My children's governess, from their extreme youth, has much time on her hands, and she is very

capable of giving the rudiments of most of these accomplishments. She will be proud of such a scholar."

I waited with trembling impatience for my father's reply, which proving favourable to my wishes, it was determined that the week following I should attend her ladyship at Mistlewood. What a revolution, altogether unlooked for, and even beyond my most sanguine expectations! Sir Henry had been my father's friend for some years. Through his interest it was that he became possessed of his living; and in Sir Henry's visits to Mistlewood, while yet Mr. Granville, he had frequently taken a family dinner at the parsonage. Having imbibed a sincere esteem for my mother, it was owing to this predilection in *her* favour that I so very early, at his desire, experienced the notice of Lady Glanville.

When the time of departure drew near, though my heart beat high with expectation, still I felt myself subdued at the thought of leaving my beloved and revered parent. The only time I had ever
quitted


quitted the paternal dwelling, what a change had I experinced on my return ! When I was absent, who would comfort and console him, and read to amuse him when his tired eyes refused their office ? Twenty times was I tempted to give up the flattering prospects that appeared dawning upon me ; and as often my tongue faltered when I was going to declare what passed within. Then I recollected I should see my father frequently ; and indeed it was very likely my absence might be but for a few days, and that the variety of objects, which my residence in another family would lead me to contemplate, would furnish stores for our future conversations ; I should consequently have the power of contributing to his amusement much more than by remaining always at home. These reflections consoled me, and I made every arrangement with additional alacrity.

The appointed day at last arrived. My father remarked it to me at breakfast, and told me he had some serious advice to give me, to which he did not doubt my

paying my usual attention. On my assent, he proceeded.

“ You are shortly going into the family of as worthy a pair as ever existed ; on your conduct, at this early age, much, perhaps, of your future happiness depends. In Lady Glanville you will find a protectress, who is both able and willing to serve you. The disadvantages you have hitherto laboured under, for want of female society, will no longer exist. Your education, as far as lay in my power, has not been neglected : but in order to enable you to gain a subsistence when I am no more, it is necessary you should be acquainted with many things your sex alone can teach. Follow implicitly the precepts of her to whom you will probably owe much, and conduct yourself with deference and respect towards the person whose particular province it is to give you instruction ; to every one in the house preserve a civil demeanour ; and if any thing unpleasant arises, disclose yourself to me : make no other confidant till you are old enough to judge who are worthy of such a
mark

mark of attachment. Sir Henry you will not often see. When you do, remember he was your father's benefactor, and, if you merit it, will be yours. You have been so little accustomed to children, you will at first think them petulant and noisy: a little reflection will suffice to shew you how short a time has elapsed since you were as troublesome. Let one maxim, above all others, be strongly imprinted on your mind; never, on any occasion whatever, to deviate from the strict line of truth. Remember what Lady Randolph says, in your favourite tragedy. *You* traced the source of all *her* sorrows to a single deviation from this sacred principle. Follow these precepts, and I shall glory in my child."



His voice faltered. I fell upon his neck; he mingled his tears with mine. Pure and innocent pleasures! Children of dissipation! ye are utter strangers to them.

In less than an hour the carriage arrived—in it the governess and one of the young ladies. They alighted; and whilst my simple wardrobe was fixed on the carriage, they

they ran round our little garden. Mrs. Wilson admired its neatness, and Miss Glanville gathered fruit she was scarcely permitted to taste. This struck me as strange, but I said nothing. When seated in the coach, and I found myself out of sight of all my father called his, I could support myself no longer—I sobbed aloud. Mrs. Wilson attempted to soothe me, while Miss Glanville expressed her wonder that I should cry. On our entering the stately avenue that led to the noble mansion, I became more composed, and finding my feet at liberty, soon forgot I had ever wept. Mrs. Wilson bade me follow her into my lady's dressing-room, who received me with a warmth of affection little proportioned to her knowledge of me or my deserts.

CHAP. II.

"An untaught girl, unschooled, unpractised :
happy in this—she is not yet so old but she may
learn; happiest of all is, that her gentle spirit
commits its self to your's to be directed."

SHAKESPEARE.

IT required, my dear friend, some strength of mind to enable so young a creature as I was, to conduct herself with any tolerable degree of propriety in a situation so different to that in which I had hitherto been placed. The kindness of Lady Glanville had occupied so much of my attention, I believed that her commands must ever be obeyed by me with cheerfulness and delight. I was told that I must consider myself at home ; but at the same time certain regulations were most strictly to be complied with ; and being professedly a pupil of Mrs. Wilson's, my very amusements were to be under her direction ; nor could I be permitted to take a turn in the garden, without having first obtained her leave for so doing.

Had

Had not my father's advice been strongly imprinted on my mind, I should have considered this order a very severe one ; I however hoped to love my preceptress, and resolved to adhere most strictly to all the rules she prescribed. The avidity with which I listened to her instructions, and the portion of time I gave up to the pursuit of knowledge, would, if continued, have soon impaired my health. Mrs. Wilson, instead of seeking to restrain my ardour, or directing me imperceptibly to what was right, appeared to enjoy my perplexity. I was not, at the period I am now treating of, capable of making this observation, yet I saw enough to induce me to apply to Lady Glanville for her sanction, in order that I might, for the present, devote my time to the study of one or two branches of education, lest, by being distracted by variety, I should not pay sufficient attention to any. My presumption was pardoned, and I was desired to pursue the dictates of my own inclination.

Though

Though I often saw my father, and went frequently to the parsonage, Lady Glanville would not suffer me to make any stay there. "Winter will soon arrive," she would say, "when I must part with my little *protégée*; in the mean time diligence and application will make you less feel the loss of your instructress. On my return, I hope to congratulate you on the progress you have made."

The time fixed for the London journey arrived much sooner than I could have wished. Lady Glanville delivered me up to my father, who thanked her, as he ought, for all her goodness to his child.

As I had appeared perfectly happy in Sir Henry's family, my father thought it probable that I might become melancholy when I quitted it; and as a certain remedy for complaints of this nature, he recommended a constant succession of employments. Though my knowledge of music was very slight, I had great pleasure in cultivating a taste for it, as the effects it produced tended so much to enliven our little dwelling. Lady Glanville, with
her

her usual Kindness, previous to her departure, sent me a piano forte from the castle. My simple strains amused my father in an evening, when he wished to relax from his studies ; while he was engaged, I attempted lessons that could have afforded no pleasure to the hearer, unless played by a skilful hand.

Spring came on, and I began to sigh for the return of my benefactress. Though I frequently heard from Mrs. Wilton, not a word was said on this subject. At last, to my inexpressible satisfaction, the family arrived, and shortly after I resumed my former apartment in the castle.

Being now grown tall, and possessing a womanly appearance, Lady Glanville made me more her companion than formerly. I frequently dined at table when there was no company, and in the morning read aloud to my lady in her dressing-room. This degree of notice appeared to offend Mrs. Wilton. When I asked her advice, or applied for instruction or information on any particular point, I was referred to my lady, who, she added, had taken the super-

superintendence of my education on herself. These answers hurt my feelings, though I did not wish to let my father know I had any cause of uneasiness, fearing that the communication might augment that solicitude which he already entertained for my future happiness. I endeavoured, by the most unremitting attention, to soften Mrs. Wilson, taking no notice of the asperity of her expressions, and flattered myself I succeeded; though I was afterwards convinced that the professions of regard which I received from her were merely dictated by policy.

The summer flew swiftly away. When the fogs of November set in, I began to grow very thoughtful; for the affection I bore to Lady Glanville made me more than ever dread the hour of separation. I observed she never spoke of the time approaching for their departure, as she had done the winter before, which indicated that the idea was equally painful to her. One morning, when I was unusually grave, she asked me how I should like her remaining all the winter at Mistlewood—
would

would I continue to stay with them? My answer was, that *that* must depend on her ladyship's will and my father's.

"You are a good girl to say so," she replied: "but I wish to know what you would do, if left to yourself."

This was a home-stroke. The dictates of my heart led me to prefer remaining with her, yet to leave my father altogether seemed to be a most unnatural proceeding. Her ladyship, penetrating into my thoughts, kindly relieving me from the embarrassment, by saying, "I will no longer play upon your feelings, my dear girl: your father gives you up entirely to my guidance, for at your age it would be improper for you to remain in his house, unless he had resident there some orderly female relation, to whose care he could confide you. From this moment consider yourself as a member of my family; and be assured, while you continue to merit my protection, you will never want a mother.

Falling upon my knees, I bathed her hand with my tears, and in broken accents endeavoured to assure her, that I should
make

make every exertion in my power to prove myself deserving of such unexampled goodness. After embracing me, she continued :

“ I did not intend to confide to you, while so young, what my views were for your future establishment ; however, as I am thoroughly persuaded that your prudence is far superior to your years, I shall at once unfold the plan I have sketched out, and trust that no effort on your part will be wanting to enable me to see it realized. From every conversation I have had with your father, I found that he wished your education to be of the superior kind, in order that you might obtain a settlement in a respectable family, as governess to their children. It was in consequence of discovering this that I offered to take you home, as I was unwilling such good natural parts, and so amiable a disposition, (as he assured me you possessed,) should run any risk of being destroyed or perverted, by the bad examples likely to occur among a great number of young people, indiscriminately collected together ;

ther ; for without the opportunities you enjoyed here of receiving instruction, to one of the great schools in the neighbourhood of the capital you would doubtless have been sent. Your diligence and application, and the evenness of temper so conspicuous in your actions, added to the lively affection you have awakened in me, has given birth to a design which I hope one day to see accomplished. Mrs. Wilson is a very good woman, as well as a sensible one ; she has, however, seen more of the world than I would wish my children to know, except from myself. While they are so young, this is of little consequence ; though, as they grow older, I should wish them to have a model before them, whose manners they might acquire, and of whose principles of virtue and rectitude I had received the most convincing proofs. There wants nothing but time, I hope, to find this person in my Caroline. Next to the pleasure of educating my daughters myself, is that which I feel in tracing the progress of your improvements, as I expect, at some future day, to see your accomplishment.

complishments communicated to them. That you may acquire what is requisite for the station you seem destined to fill, I shall take you to London with me, and there, under my own inspection, the first masters in every department shall attend to give you instructions. Can I doubt your docility in receiving them, from the proofs I have already had of your desire to gain information? Sir Henry approves of my plan, and your father is warmly interested for its success; yet notwithstanding all this, if your heart feels any repugnance to its being put in execution, whatever may be your destination in life, you may always rely on Sir Henry and myself as your best friends; nor shall our endeavours be wanting to promote your views in any other line which may be deemed eligible for your sex and years."

Can I, Miss Middleton, after this conversation, find it necessary to give any other proof of this angelic woman's manner of conferring a favour? From that moment she acquired an ascendancy over me, which no distance of time could obliterate

literate. Perhaps, had this not been the case, many days of sorrow had been spared to us both. But I will not anticipate your attention.

I set out for London, bidding a long adieu to my father with less reluctance than I could have believed. This was to be accounted for, from my mind being so occupied with the new scene I was entering upon. My happiness for many years to come, and, indeed, perhaps that of my whole life, depended on my conduct at this trying period.

At an age, (scarcely sixteen) when other girls are chiefly occupied by amusement, I felt *my* time must be wholly devoted to business; and the great city, of which I had heard so much, I never thought of, except when I dreaded that I might not be capable of the tasks that would be there allotted to me to perform. We had not been two days in Grosvenor-square, when I hinted to her ladyship how precious the time was. She laughed at my impatience; and in less than a week I had begun Italian, drawing, and dancing. Nor

was

was music omitted, I had one of the first masters to perfect me in that accomplishment. In town I had an apartment entirely to myself, where I received the lessons of my masters; and so little did I move out of it, except for a morning's walk or ride, with Mrs. Wilson and the young ladies, before those who compose the fashionable world were stirring, that scarce any of her ladyship's acquaintance knew I was in the house.

In the Easter recess Sir Henry and Lady Glanville went to Bath. Then it was that I felt some of the effects of Mrs. Wilson's resentment. I was unconscious of having merited harsh treatment from this lady, as I was innocent of any intention to supplant her. I was also satisfied, that had Lady Glanville never known *me*, she would not have been continued as governess to the young ladies beyond a certain time. Notwithstanding this conviction, I considered it my duty to pay her every attention in my power; and sometimes I fancied she felt grateful for them, and ashamed of having vented her ill-humour upon me.

On Sir Henry and Lady Glanville's return from Bath, they brought their two sons, Edward and Charles, along with them, from Eton, the eldest eighteen, the other sixteen. Edward was to leave school, in order to enter at Cambridge ; and as they had been very little in London, they were now to spend a month there. Lady Glanville, before she left town, had settled, that previous to her return I was to go to the house of a lady who was an intimate friend of hers, to pass the time of the young gentlemen's visit ; for, with her accustomed foresight, she thought that they would prove a hindrance to my studies. Mrs. Ashford, though a woman of very good fortune, mixed little with the gay world ; and my being in her family was perfectly agreeable to her. Here I redoubled my diligence, that when I returned to Lady Glanville she might perceive a difference. I was happy to find that I succeeded, and that Mrs. Ashford became so interested about me as to request I might be left with her when Lady Glanville returned to Wales, as she thought it a
pity

pity I should stop, when I appeared so earnest. Five or six months was a long time to be absent; I might lose a great part of what I had gained. As her removal from town would be only for two or three months, and to a very easy distance, my masters could still attend me. In short, there appeared so much good sense in her arguments, that Lady Glanville consented to my remaining, and undertook to manage matters with my father, whom I longed much to see.

CHAP. III.

"Thou, when thy vessel flies before the wind,
"Think on the peaceful port thou left behind;
"Though all serene, yet bear a humble sail,
"Left veering greatness shift the treach'rous gale."

HAMILTON.

THOUGH I experienced no small degree of regret at parting with my kind benefactress, my mind was too much engrossed, by a consideration of the permanent advantages I should derive from remaining near London, to leave little leisure for reflecting on the loss I should sustain in her absence.

Mrs. Ashford was a kind-hearted woman; but she wanted that refinement and delicacy so conspicuous in my beloved patroness. I declined going into company with her till I perceived she was seriously offended. It was the season when almost all Lady Glanville's acquaintance were in the country, which made me comply with less reluctance; for though I knew not the meaning of the word *pride*, I felt that I should

should not like to be received by the same people as an independent character, who would afterwards view me in a different one in her family.

In the village where we past the autumn I had very little inducement to form acquaintance : cards and scandal were the chief amusements. I told Mrs. Ashford very seriously, at last, that she must excuse my giving up my evenings to these visits, for my time was too precious : I would walk or ride with her in a morning, when it did not interfere with my masters hours ; but in the afternoon I must remain at home. I should willingly have made a contrary arrangement, but she was perpetually engaged in the evening, and seldom out in the morning. I wrote constantly to Lady Glanville, whose kind letters were a source from whence I derived much comfort and satisfaction. My father too was my constant correspondent : but Mrs. Wilson had declined that office, saying I no longer stood in need of her instructions. This, I suppose, was to shew

that friendship had no part in those she formerly addressed to me.

When Mrs. Ashford returned to town for the winter, I anxiously counted the days that intervened between our arrival and that fixed for the meeting of parliament, as I knew Sir Henry was very punctual in taking his place there. By a letter from my father, I found the family were detained by the illness of Miss Glanville, who soon fell a sacrifice to a putrid sore throat. How earnestly did I then wish that I had accompanied the family to the country ! By my assiduities I might have spared the anxious mother from too close an attendance on her beloved child, which perhaps had endangered her own health.

In order to divert her attention, Sir Henry sent for his sons from college (Charles having now left school.) When they returned, the family came to London. I had been almost eight months absent from Lady Glanville ; judge of the transport with which I embraced her. The melancholy event which had happened during

during that time gave a mournful tinge to the meeting, or the pleasure we both experienced would have been without alloy. Her Ladyship acquainted me that Mrs. Wilson had requested her dismissal, in rather an unbecoming manner, saying, that now Miss Glanville was no more, the young girl, who was intended to supply her place, would do very well for the younger children; therefore her services could not be wanted. After this language, Lady Glanville could not look upon her in the same light she had hitherto done, though she had brought her to town; yet, as she would not be many days in the house, it would be as well for me to continue where I was, till she had quitted it. Although her Ladyship did not express herself to this effect, I found I must soon enter upon the duties of my office.

At seventeen years of age I was called upon to instruct others; and, with manners hardly formed myself, was expected to model those of the daughters of a family of the first distinction. I felt, in all its force, the arduous part I had undertaken

to fill, and determined to let no other object engross any part of my attention ; to watch Lady Glanville, and to copy her unaffected ease should, if possible, be my study.

Though I had been so much in the house with Sir Henry, I knew but little of him ; from henceforth with what a scrutinizing eye would he view me ! For the first time in my life I dreaded entering their house, which, from the hour I first knew it, I had ever been taught to consider as a home. Lady Glanville had not confided to Mrs. Ashford, nor, I believe, to a single creature breathing, the particular interest she had taken in me ; to this lady she merely said, that when I was old enough, she intended to get me established in some family of her acquaintance, as governess to their children. This made it improper for me to disclose myself to any person. The suspense and agitation of my mind made me think the week that elapsed, ere I was permitted to remove to Grosvenor-square, a little month. When I found myself arrived at the summit of
my

my wishes, I thought I must have shrunk into primæval nothingness. Then it was that I first tasted the supreme consolations to be drawn from a perusal of the sacred writings. The firm reliance I had on the goodness of the Almighty to those who put their whole trust in him, enabled me to enter upon my new duties with alacrity, and to perform them in a manner that met the approbation of those, whose good opinion I prized more highly than even my existence.

My two little girls, Lucy and Maria, the one eleven, the other ten, appeared much attached to me. They were too young to perceive that I wanted that air of authority which their former governess assumed. When they infringed any of the rules I laid down, gentle means I generally found efficacious for bringing them back to the right path; and as I would always prefer that kind of obedience which springs from *love*, rather than *fear*, I made the loss of my favour appear the severest punishment that I could inflict. *

Three years passed away without any incident to interrupt my felicity ; Lady Glanville still continuing to express herself perfectly satisfied with my care and attention, while Sir Henry honoured me with a degree of notice which was highly flattering. In the country, I frequently made one in their family parties, though, in town, I scarcely ever left the sweet girls, except occasionally to visit Mrs. Ashford, who still evinced a partiality to me, at the same time requested I would come unaccompanied, as she never had any children herself, and knew not how to amuse young people.

My father, who in his youth had never been robust, now seemed to have his constitution much impaired. Whenever I saw him, he spoke of approaching dissolution, as an event which he rather hoped for than feared. How earnestly did he then intreat me always to act so as to receive the protection of Lady Glanville ! I needed not his exhortation ; my heart felt the obligations I was under, and I would have sooner forfeited my existence than willingly

lingly have been the occasion of any uneasiness to her.

At this time, when I had entered my twenty-first year, I lost my father. His last illness was neither violent nor of long duration ; it was a gradual decay of nature, and he expired apparently without pain. I had been so long taught to expect his death, that I bore it with a degree of calmness which I could hardly have looked for myself. My grief, however, for his loss, was not the less poignant ; and instead of decreasing, the more I reflected upon my peculiar situation, the more reason I had to bewail my insulated state. Should any thing arise to make my residence in Sir Henry's family less eligible than it had hitherto been, I had no asylum to fly to—no kind relation to receive me ! Sir Henry and his lady had, it is true, been zealous friends to me, and I was daily receiving proofs of their kindness : but who could tell what was to happen ? In a moment their protection might be withdrawn, and then what was to become of me ? Mrs. Ashford had made me many

professions, and on every occasion acted up to them : but with Lady Glanville I should most likely lose her countenance.

After reflecting in this manner, I began to accuse myself of ingratitude to Heaven. with the talents I possessed, I could surely gain my own subsistence. The little modicum left me by my father was always a resource in case of need ; and though compelled by any untoward circumstance to quit the family of Glanville, as I knew my principles were too firmly fixed to induce me to act inconsistent with the maxims that had been inculcated by Lady Glanville, why should I dread losing her favour, that could be extended to me, though no longer a member of her household ?

You will naturally suppose some coolness on the part of one of the principals had given birth to these reflections ; on the contrary, their affection appeared unabated, of which I had proofs in a variety of instances. My pupils I loved as if they were my own sisters, and their improvement kept pace with my wishes, for they considered

considered no task too hard which I imposed. Do not think me capricious, my amiable friend, when I tell you, that in spite of all these requisites for happiness, I was far from enjoying a tranquil mind.

To acquit myself of this imputation, I must beg your attention to a relation of incidents, which, though not yet touched upon, had occurred some months previous to the death of my father.

CHAP. IV.

"Fair Peace through all her secret haunts explore;
 "Consult the learn'd in life (these best advise);
 "The good, in this, more knowing than the wise;
 "Their sacred science learn, and what the art
 "To guard the fallies of the impetuous heart."

HAMILTON.

UNFORTUNATELY for me, Lady Glanville had sons as well as daughters. I felt an affection for them because they were hers; and without considering them in any other light than as the sons of those to whom I was so tenderly attached, became interested in all that related to them. During the last three years they had been frequently at home. Their attentions were so equal to me, that I knew ~~not~~ which I preferred; only that the peculiar fund of humour, conspicuous in Charles, made his conversation most entertaining. Edward, the eldest, had more dignity of manner; and without being able to account for it, I always felt a restraint in his company which I did not with the other. The
 last

last time they were at the castle, I had remarked a change in the elder of the brothers—an eagerness to serve me, when no person observed him, and the guard he seemed to have upon his assiduities, when near his mother. Several times, while walking with his sisters, I have met him in the grounds: he would suddenly approach me, and then, with an embarrassed air, ask if I never stirred without my charges. I generally turned the conversation, without appearing to notice the singularity of the question. These things surprised me at the moment, but I was too much occupied with my employment to let them make much impression on my mind.

The day previous to their departure for Cambridge, as I was crossing a gallery that led to the suite of apartments particularly appropriated to the young ladies and myself, Mr. Glanville darted upon me. Seizing my hand with an avidity that deprived me of the power of resistance—
“Am I always to be treated with the same coldness? Will nothing soften that obdurate heart?”

Before

Before I had power to disengage my hand, it was carried to his lips. The fervor of the kisses imprinted on it roused me, and, animated with new strength, I tore myself from him, regaining my chamber without his having moved from the spot. My God ! what were my sensations on finding myself alone ! I awakened, as if from a dream, and could have wished myself in a state of annihilation. A thousand proofs rushed into my mind to convince me that Mr. Glanville had dared to entertain a criminal passion for me. My obscurity and *his* rank, as the presumptive heir and representative of an ancient family, made it impossible for the most romantic imagination to view his conduct in any other light—the son of my benefactors become my bitterest enemy ! I was on the point of flying to my father, to disclose every thing to him, and to quit Lady Glanville's protection for ever. A little recollection shewed me the impropriety of acting in this manner: to plant thorns on *his* pillow, who appeared on the verge of eternity, would be cruelty in the extreme.

treme. The next day would relieve me from the presence of Mr. Glanville; by my behaviour he might judge of the little probability of my listening to his passion. In a short time a variety of new objects would make him forget he had ever entertained it: in the interim, I should endeavour to secure the friendship of his mother, not only by my attention to my pupils, but by every other means in my power.

It was fortunate for me, my dear friend, that the ungovernable passion of my admirer so soon discovered itself; for upon examining my heart, I was astonished to find it so susceptible of his attractions. This outrage operated like a charm. Had it not been for this, I am afraid he would have had a powerful advocate within; and though common sense must, on the least reflection, have pointed out the folly of indulging a predilection for Mr. Glanville, yet had he continued the same insinuating mode of behaviour he at first adopted, my affections would have been inevitably gained before I had entertained the smallest suspicions

suspensions of *his* designs, or my own weakness. I pleaded indisposition for not appearing again that day. It was easily credited; for the agitation of my spirits nearly brought on a fever. I was shocked at my own ingratitude, in finding I had dared to harbour a wish, the accomplishment of which would disturb the harmony of the family to whom I owed every thing. I was innocent in attention, for I knew no better; believing the pleasure excited by associating with Mr. Glanville would have been of the same kind, had he been my brother.

The young gentlemen had been absent a fortnight, when I received a letter addressed to me, in an unknown hand, inclosing one that I knew to be from Mr. Glanville; for I had often had occasion to see his hand writing. Without opening it, I immediately returned it by the next post. Now that I was upon my guard, I resolved to act as if from the instructions of Lady Glanville.

Immediately after this, anxiety for my father got the better of every other consideration.

sideration. When he was no more, I had sufficient reason for reflecting on the peculiar hardships I laboured under. With such powerful reasons to dread the future, can you now wonder that I was unhappy? The recent death of my father was an excuse for my thoughtfulness. Those who looked not beyond outward circumstances perhaps satirised me for my affectation: but I “wore that within that passed shew.”

The time drew near when I was to encounter the person whom I considered as the invader of my peace. I dreaded his coming, yet I hoped much from absence, and the natural inconstancy of the sex. Our first interview was at table. His manner was respectful, and even betrayed something like self-humiliation. I looked as seldom as possible towards that part where he sat; when I did, he appeared lost in thought. This was no indication of his having forgotten me: but at least I might consider myself safe from a repetition of his rudeness. As I had been accustomed to mix so little in the family,
there

there was nothing singular in my keeping out of his way. My greatest mortification arose from being obliged to discontinue my long walks, from the fear of meeting him in the grounds. At last, to my great relief, the brothers set out on a week's excursion ; of course I availed myself of this opportunity of resuming my former habits.

One afternoon, that I had strolled to a shady walk, situated almost at the extremity of the park, where I often used to enjoy a favourite author, I was much surprised by the approach of Mr. Glanville. A retreat being impracticable, I summoned all my courage to my aid ; though his appearance would, to any other person, have excited pity rather than terror, his countenance had so much dejection depicted on it ; and when he begged my pardon for the intrusion, his voice was so tremulous I hardly knew how to reply. My embarrassment gave him confidence to proceed. He then assured me of the inviolable respect I had always inspired—he should never forgive himself for having dared to insult so much purity.

purity. Had I deigned to peruse the letter I returned to him, he had some expectation that the sentiments it breathed would have apologized for an act of frenzy that, he owned, but little merited my forgiveness. I coolly thanked him for the honour he did me, in considering my opinion of his conduct of the smallest moment; I, however, was at a loss to conceive how one fault could be repaired by committing another, as certainly his presuming to write to me was full as great an infringement of the laws of good breeding as the affront he alluded to. Absent from the woman on earth I most valued—separated too at a time when she had reason to be offended with me—I could not thus stoically argue on the rules suggested by politeness.

“This language, Sir, is neither becoming in me to hear, nor in you to use. Remember what is due to me, as filling the important station which *your* mother has vouchsafed to think me worthy of.” All the softer emotions left me in uttering

ing these words—I felt myself the insulted though proud Caroline Williams.

“ For Heaven’s sake hear me out !” said he, following me, for I was making the best of my way to the house—“ I mean not to offend you, unless requesting you to believe me the sincerest and most honourable of lovers will have that effect. Give me but the most distant ray of hope, and I will at once declare my sentiments to my family. My mother, I am certain, will be my friend, and I shall look forward, at some future day, to being the happiest of men.”

“ How nobly should I repay her unexampled kindness, by seducing her son from his duty ! No--believe me, Sir, no consideration on earth can ever prompt me to lose sight of what I owe both to her ladyship and Sir Henry. From this moment banish such idle thoughts from your mind ; be assured in a short time you will blush for having harboured them.”

“ Rather say I shall glory in the recollection ! The more you condemn me,
the

the more I feel irresistibly impelled to continue a pursuit, which, if successful in the end, would repay for years of trial and suspense."

When I saw him thus resolutely bent on what must prove a source of unhappiness to both, I ventured to make use of artifice; and though I did not absolutely say I was engaged to another, gave him to understand my affections were no longer at my own disposal. In some respects this was too true; and I dreaded lest I should betray myself when I saw the effect of the information.

"Tis well, madam—I will no longer be a bar to your happiness. May the favoured mortal, whom you prize so highly know the value of the gift you confer upon him."

He drew back, lest he should be observed by any of the domestics, and *I* reached the castle, in a state of mind not to be envied. I had fulfilled my duty—that was my consolation: but, alas! I had the feelings of my sex; and in the bitterness of my heart repined at the obscurity
of

of my birth. Had I been the daughter of a duke, and, the heiress of a wealthy domain, I should have been proud to share my rank and fortune with Edward Glanville : but unfortunately, I was only the *bumble élève* of his father and mother. My spirit towered above my fortunes ; I dared to refuse his proffered hand, when it was inconsistent with my honour to accept it.

In a few months Mr. Glanville set out on his travels. This circumstance gave me sincere pleasure, particularly as he made no effort to see me in private previous to his departure.

Here I must express my surprise that Lady Glanville, who was so penetrating on every other occasion, should have had no suspicions of her son's attachment. Many times I have been on the point of disclosing all that had passed to her ; a fear of betraying myself constantly withheld me, as well as the dread of losing that place in her family which it was so much my desire, for some time at least, to retain.

Once,

Once, in the fullness of her heart, when speaking of her children, she communicated to me Sir Henry's plan for his eldest son. Upon his return to England, he intended to procure him a seat in parliament, and then, as soon as was consistent with his inclinations, he wished him to marry; for which purpose he was improving and beautifying a seat in Shropshire, which was to be his place of residence. Sir Henry, she added, had also an alliance in view for him in the earl of B——'s family, who had two daughters, Lady Jane and Lady Frances, both under twenty, who, she believed, were amiable young women: but, she knew not why, she always dreaded the earl and Sir Henry's conferences together; it seemed as if Edward's inclinations would be so little consulted in forming the connexion.—“Charles,” she continued, “will be the richer man of the two; for he inherits two thousand a-year from an uncle of mine, for whom he was named; he will have no state to keep up, and may marry the woman of his choice, without offend-

ing his father ; and through our connexions he is likely to be a dignitary of the church. There is, indeed, a living of some consequence in Sir Henry's gift, which, when the present incumbent dies (who is now old) will undoubtedly become his. My girls, thanks to their father's excellent management, will have good portions, and *my* fortune, not an inconsiderable one, is also settled upon them : but to you, my dear girl, they are indebted for what riches cannot procure them—virtuous minds and religious principles. If they had imbibed nothing else from you, my obligations for your watchful care would be great ; though every one who sees them can judge, that with the *useful*, the *ornamental* has been blended."

Could I do otherwise than adore a woman who acted and talked in this strain, or attempt to wound her maternal bosom, by declaring that her fears for Edward's happiness had some foundation in reality ; particularly as I hoped, ere his return, that all obstacles to it would exist only in my imagination ?

CHAP. V.

“Nor are those empty hearted, whose low sound
reverbs no hollowness.”

SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN Mr. Glanvile had been two years absent, I received a letter from an old lady at Liverpool, who said she was a cousin of my mother's, and having no children, wished me to come and live with her, unless I was so settled that I could not leave Lady Glanvile. I knew not what answer to return, yet was pleased to find there was somebody in the world who thought it worth their while to acknowledge me as a relation. Her excuses for not earlier taking this step were by no means valid: she said it was through a friend at Shrewsbury she had heard of me, who had accidentally seen me there when Sir Henry paid a visit to Comber Park, the estate he was improving.

Lady Glanvile and the family then passed some time in Shrewsbury, and insisted on

my accompanying them every where. At some house where we visited, a lady of the name of Rowe, had been particularly civil to me. Having heard Mrs. Belton speak of a cousin who married a clergyman of the name of Williams, and afterwards went to settle in Wales, she was prepossessed with the idea that I was daughter to this couple. On her communicating this to Mrs. Belton, the matter was fully investigated, and, in consequence of the information received, this invitation was in due form sent to me.

Lady Glanville advised me by all means to pay her a visit, that I might be enabled to form some judgment whether she was a woman worth attending to. However, unless Mrs. Belton was infirm, and it might be prejudicial to my interest, her ladyship could not think of parting with me altogether, at least for a year ; and indeed she knew not how to be reconciled to the idea at any period the most distant that could be named, if it were not proving herself very selfish to keep me from better prospects than in her power to offer.

I com-

I comprehended her meaning. In the house of Sir Henry Glanville I could never be looked upon in the same independent light which I should be in that of a relation, who avowedly adopted me as her child: and whose fortune was sufficiently ample to provide for me, and yet satisfy her other connexions. I wrote, therefore, to Mrs. Belton, thanking her for her kind intentions; adding, that I had obtained Lady Glanville's permission to pay her a visit, when the family went to London for the winter, as at that time I could be best spared, the young ladies having masters to attend them. This was to shew that I was not disposed to relinquish my charge. Her answer was as friendly as could be wished; and when her ladyship had fixed the day for my setting out, I wrote again to inform Mrs. Belton when she might expect me. Lady Glanville, with her usual delicacy, sent me in one of her post-chariots, attended by an upper female servant, and a man as escort. They were afterwards to go to Grosvenor-square, and I was to communicate, as early as possible,

the mode in which I had been received, &c. that some idea might be formed of the length of my visit.

Though at *fourteen* I had left my father's house, and now *twenty-two*, I might really consider this as my first essay among strangers, a few particulars excepted, which, in spite of my better sense, would sometimes rise to my recollection, seriously speaking, I had encountered no difficulties—Lady Glanville had been more than a mother to me. During my stay at Mrs. Ashford's I was so engaged in attending to points of much importance, that I had not time to study her character with any degree of discrimination. She had always treated me with kindness since, which I concluded must proceed from a good disposition, for I had taken very little pains to please her. Deference for the opinion of her friend Lady Glanville might lead her to overlook many defects which one, without such an example, would immediately discover.

Such reflections occupied me the whole way. My companion, Mrs. Jenkins, finding

ing me very stupid, most obligingly fell asleep, which left me at full liberty to pursue my own thoughts.

When we entered the city, the face of business, which every one we met seemed to wear, struck me more particularly than it had done in London. I had been so seldom in the trading part of it, I knew little beyond the bustle of Bond-street, or a stoppage of carriages in the Strand. Of a croud of shipping I had scarce an idea; for I do not remember that I had at that time ever crossed London bridge. I dreaded the new society I was to enter; and when the carriage drove up the street in which I was told my relation lived, I almost wished I had never set out.

Notwithstanding this reflection, I was not at all ill-pleased to see the house we stopped at was large and handsome. When the door was opened, the hall appeared spacious: the servant was respectable, and looked as if grown grey in the service. On entering the parlour, I found Mrs. Belton rising to receive me, though the gout, which she had in her feet, would

hardly permit her to be very ceremonious. I did not feel myself much elated at the first sight ; however, as I experienced nothing repelling in my present frame of mind, I hoped, upon an intimate acquaintance, I should discover something more attractive than fancy had pictured. She viewed me narrowly, and said she should have known me by the likeness to my mother. After giving me a most cordial welcome, she expressed some compunction for not having enquired after my family before.

On a cursory examination, I perceived her desire of displaying wealth ; the side-board seemed almost to bend beneath the weight of massy plate which covered it. Her own dress was rich, and the furniture of the house as costly as could be contrived. Under this appearance of profusion I discovered no taste ; there was a sameness that pervaded every thing ; and I shrunk back when I thought of the cheerful elegant abode I had left.

Mrs. Belton, I suppose, was near sixty ; she had been a pretty woman, and, as I afterwards learned, a very proud one. *My*
mother

mother marrying a *poor country parson* was a crime never to be forgiven. Being several years older, Mrs. Belton took upon her to remonstrate on the folly of such a step: but my mother's resolution was fixed, and not to be shaken. In consequence of this contempt of her opinion, Mrs. Belton gave up all correspondence with her cousin; and if she had not heard of *me*, as being under the protection of so respectable a woman as Lady Glanville, it is more than probable I should have been as little sought after.

The next morning I wrote to Lady Glanville, promising to be with her in a fortnight; for I recollected, that though my young friends would not miss me so much in the great city, in regard to lessons, as in the country, yet, from her ladyship's engagements, she would have it less in her power to attend them in their rides, &c. and I knew she had great aversion to trusting them even with her own woman. I did not pretend to dive into my new-found relation's character, giving a faithful account of my reception; adding, it

was well for me I had prepared myself not to expect a Lady Glanville.

On conversing with Mrs. Belton concerning my future designs, previous to my hearing from her, I found her respect for me did not increase when she understood I had no ambition beyond the situation I had hitherto held in the family of my benefactress. Surely I had not intended to remain a governess all my life? Had I formed no connexions that were likely to advance me? In short, had I no views of marrying? A young woman of my accomplishments (here the vanity of the relation shone forth) mixing in such company as I had done, must have attracted some attention; and doubtless, to be my own mistress was better than the most elevated state of servitude---for such mine must be called---and of that kind where there was less exemption from labour than any other.

“Do you set no value on the friendship and conversation of such a woman as Lady Glanville? I was tempted to cry out, but prudence stifled the emotion. I then assured

fured her I had not a wish ungratified ; and that as long as Lady Glanville's daughters required my care, I considered myself bound to afford them the exertion of my abilities ; for independently of the asylum I had found in her house, when death bereft me of my only protector, whatever talents I possessed were to be attributed to her great goodness in affording me those instructions, without which I had been *nothing*, and *known nothing*.

This *ferté* did not, I believe, wholly displease Mrs. Belton, though she was mortified that I could not at once see the advantages to be derived from a residence with her ; yet had she found me disposed to throw myself entirely upon her bounty, I am confident she would have been less liberal in her offers of protection. That they were prompted more by ostentation than kindness, I was well convinced ; for she had not a sufficient knowledge of me to know whether I was deserving of them, My long residence in one family, it was true, told much in my favour : but it was evident, from her expressions, that she

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conceived

conceived, as *her companion*, I should be not a little raised above my former station, consequently, without some trial, no judgment could be formed of the manner in which I should acquit myself.

After being a few days in her house, I began to consider how very necessary for my own peace of mind it was to think well of this lady, and to endeavour not only to acquire her affections, but to give mine in return. Whenever Mr. Glanville proposed returning to this country, it would undoubtedly have been my duty to quit his father's family, whether I had a home to go to or not. Improbable as it was, that after so long an absence a boyish passion should still have dominion over him, yet the sight of me might awaken many ideas which, without it, would be banished from his remembrance.

Your generous nature will perhaps prompt you to despise my cool deliberation in thus endeavouring to reason myself into an attachment for Mrs. Belton, which you may think could hardly be excited, but as a spontaneous tribute springing immediately

mediately from the heart; recollect, however, my dear friend, that on this point you cannot be competent to decide. Born to independence and affluence, you have never found it necessary to repress any desire consistent with virtue to indulge. I had *ever* known myself *dependent*, and had too often found, that to trust to one's own predilections did not suit those who were in my circumstances.

Though I had a high respect for Mrs. Wilson, and followed her rules implicitly, yet, from my failing to flatter her as she expected, she was soon disgusted with me; and had I not been too firmly fixed in Lady Glanville's good opinion to be affected by her insinuations, I should undoubtedly have been dismissed the family instead of herself. Mrs. Ashford had complained to her ladyship of my want of subservience in my temper; neither could I deny, that at the time I was at her house it ever entered my head that it was at all necessary to give up *my* plan to *her's*. I imagined that my inflexibility was praiseworthy; though I recollected with sorrow, afterwards,

afterwards, that I missed many opportunities of obliging her, and feared that such inattention on my part would lead her to think worse of my heart than I hoped it deserved.

In regard to Mrs. Belton, whatever were the motives that induced her to find me out, and to offer me protection, she certainly merited my warmest gratitude; and, as the only person I had been permitted to look up to, in the endearing light of relation, since the death of my father, ought to awaken respect and attention.

It required all these reflections to make me look forward, without repugnance to becoming an inmate in this family, and to consider my actions as altogether controllable by the head of it. During my visit, I was introduced to several of the families with whom Mrs. Belton was in habits of intimacy: and if I had not made it my earnest request not to enter into the various parties which were projected, I should have been carried about as a fiew to half the town.

I could form but an imperfect idea of the society of the place at this time: I perceived, however, a taste for expensive dress; and that if I lived with Mrs. Belton in that city, it would cost me, in that article, at least double the sum it had ever done while with Lady Glanville; for whatever my own inclination might be, I was confident Mrs. Belton would wish me to appear like the daughters of the principal merchants, who form the genteel circle, not only in Liverpool, but in all commercial towns. This circumstance would not be worth mentioning, if it were not that it tended to diminish the value of the annual income which my friend proposed settling on me, in our first conversation after my arrival.

When the day appointed for my journey approached, I found myself in an awkward predicament. I could only promise that, whenever Lady Glanville considered her daughters' education so far completed as not to stand in need of my further instructions, I would turn to the house of
Mrs.

Mrs. Belton, as to my paternal home, and submit myself wholly to her direction; except, indeed, in the article of marriage, for which state I had not the smallest inclination.

You will smile at this preliminary, but I thought it absolutely necessary to make it; for I could not help observing, that settling an advantageous match for me appeared to be the predominant wish of my good friend, who had been twice led to the altar, without any inducement save that of adding to her coffers. She had been always exempt from the care of bringing up a family, by having no children; and possessing little sensibility, had buried both her husbands without suffering much sorrow. Neither had she lived otherwise than happily with them; for having chosen men in the same situation in life with herself, who had not very high notions of the understandings of women, they saw no deficiencies; consequently she had passed through life without having had much to ruffle her: all her wishes being gratified,
by

by knowing she was considered by the world as a woman of fortune, who had no person to controul her.

Possessing no small portion of what is deemed worldly wisdom, she had always contrived to keep her property in her own hands ; and with her last husband the agreement was, that the longest liver should benefit considerably from the estate of the deceased. A good constitution enabled her to profit much by this arrangement. When I was first introduced to her, she was reputed to be worth thirty thousand pounds ; and I believe her riches were not magnified by report, as is too frequently the case.

Mr. Belton traded to the Levant, and in the last year or two of his life had considerable losses, by the failure of one of his correspondents there, or he would have left a much larger property. Luckily, however, for my cousin, her settlement was secured on houses in the town, which, after her marriage, owing to the rapid increase of the trade of Liverpool, had nearly risen to double their original value. By this means

means she secured almost all that the creditors adjudged to belong to the heirs of the deceased, and disappointed the children of his younger brother, who had been taught to expect something handsome from their uncle. Mr. Belton's motive for entering into such an engagement certainly sprung from the same source as the lady's, and each hoped to survive the other; but it was hard that an innocent family should suffer for another's avarice.

I digress strangely. This information was not acquired during my first visit, yet it is as well to communicate it here. You will find a part of the Belton family make no inconsiderable figure in the following pages.

I left Liverpool with a positive promise of keeping up a regular correspondence with my relation, and an assurance that I would seize the first opportunity that offered of paying her another visit. At parting, she presented me with an elegant gold watch and a bank note, to defray, she said, any extraordinary expences which my attendance on her had obliged me to incur.

cur. At that moment I accused myself of not meriting her kindness. I forgot that any other motive governed her actions, excepting an earnest desire of repairing her neglect of the mother by attentions to the daughter, and I lamented that I could not at once evince a proper sense of her favours by giving her my society, which she appeared to prize so highly.

By the time I reached Grosvenor-square these dispositions insensibly vanished. I was again to be blest with the counsels and endearing conversation of one of the first of women. In the caresses of those dear girls who loved me almost as much as they did their mother, what a source of delight was opened to me !

Before I had made a complete retrospect of the light in which I viewed the *whole* family, I was roused by the post-boy's stopping to enquire of Mrs. Belton's servant which house he was to stop at. When I found myself encircled by this beloved groupe, I felt as if the world was nothing to me—my heart was not capacious

pacious enough to give admission to another guest. Days of innocence and peace! even at this distance of time, how ye live in my remembrance!

CHAP. VI.

Small things make base men proud.

SHAKESPEARE.

THIS winter passed away without any event to mark it. Lady Glanville approved of my promise to Mrs. Belton, though she sometimes said she wished we had never heard of her; for she hoped, as long as she lived, to have attached me to herself, unless, by marrying well, I had gained a home of my own. In this light she would endeavour to look upon my going to reside with Mrs. Belton, though she feared I had not a sufficient knowledge of life to guard me from the artifices I should find practised by those who had hitherto imagined themselves secure of her favour. "It is this consideration, my dear," she would say, "that makes me dread parting with you. You have hitherto viewed mankind in the most favourable light, and have not the most distant

tant idea of what kind of beings a world is composed of."

Not for many years did I fully experience the truth of this remark, when, by duplicity, under the fairest form, I was wounded in the tenderest point. Lady Glanville's words rose to my recollection. I thanked the Almighty for his goodness in making me so little vulnerable to the shafts of malice, and sympathized most sincerely with those, whose dependant situations sometimes expose to unmerited obloquy, and who, besides having their feelings deeply wounded by the baseness and ingratitude of those in whom they have placed confidence, are also probably deprived of respectable situations, which they had hitherto considered permanent, without having the power of exculpating themselves, or ascertaining, with precision, from whence the blow has proceeded.

During the summer I continued to write to Mrs. Belton, and, by Lady Glanville's desire, engaged to spend a month with her at the same season I had done before. I had also leave to promise to take up my
abode

abode with her in the ensuing year, when the family left town to retire to Mistlewood, provided Mrs. Belton was still as strenuous for my going as formerly.

In all this time I heard nothing of Mr. Glanville, except from his parents, who were delighted with his letters, and the improvement which, they understood from others, he had made during his absence. Charles was ever the entertaining companion, without losing sight of the respect due to me as the governess of his sisters. Indeed their worthy mother set the example to the whole family, for nothing was to be undertaken by my fair charges without first having obtained my approbation. My lady told me she thought this was absolutely necessary, lest from my extreme youth, they might be tempted to slight my authority. She was in this, as in every other part of her conduct, not only towards me, but to all who belonged to her establishment, truly considerate, blending the indulgent mistress with the kind and sincere friend.

View

View me again the visitor of Mrs. Belton. More affectionate in her manner than at first, I was less restrained in her presence ; and as she was now in better health, and disposed to go much abroad among her friends, I attended her with great pleasure ; though I could not but observe, with some degree of disgust, the servile adulation that was paid to me. The presumptive heiress of the woman supposed to be worth thirty thousand pounds was no despicable character ; and my opinion and sentiments, when I ventured to deliver any, were listened to with attention, and retailed, by those who wished to ensure my relation's favour, with an air of authority as if they were decisive, and admitted of no appeal.

You will conclude, at this period of my life, while every thing around me wore so flattering an aspect, I attracted some admirers among the gentlemen. Had they been much more refined in their manners, than can naturally be expected from those who are immersed in trade, all their eloquence

quence would have been lavished to little purpose with me. When compared with one, whom I ought never to have thought of, how did they sink in my estimation ! You will smile at my singular mode of thinking, but from the moment that I knew Mr. Glanville was attached to me, I felt myself in some degree responsible to him for every part of my conduct ; and I determined if I ever married (which I did not think probable) it should be such a man, whom I could, without a blush, introduce to him as the husband of her he once honoured with his affection, and whom he had wished to elevate to the rank of his wife.

My indifference surprised Mrs. Belton. She wondered that so young a woman should have so little taste for public places, and observed to some of her intimate friends, when I was present, that I appeared to receive more gratification from a *tête-à-tête* with her, enlivened by reading aloud occasionally, than by attending the most brilliant assembly. I owned that, from having been accustomed all my life

to a family circle, I felt constrained when in a large one, particularly as among the groupe, numerous as it was, I in vain endeavoured to discern a countenance that I had the smallest knowledge of. They seemed to admit of this excuse, though I plainly perceived it was presumed that pride was the real cause of my reserve.

I should not include one amiable young woman in this censure, whose generous nature prompted her to offer me her friendship ; nor has she in any instance, through a course of many years, once deviated from what she professed.

Miss Brumme.l had been blest with a mother, who bore a striking resemblance to my dear Lady Glanville, except that ill health, and a husband of a very opposite disposition to Sir Henry, limited her natural desire of doing good ; yet with all these disadvantages, she educated her daughter in the strictest principles of virtue and benevolence, always enjoining her to have an opinion of her own, and to accustom herself to reflection ; for that all *her* trials through life had proceeded from

too implicit a confidence in those whom she imagined her friends, and on whose discernment she relied in preference to her own. This greatness of mind in a parent is not often to be met with; neither is it probable Mrs. Brummell would have taken such pains to impress these dispositions in her daughter, if she had not felt that her own constitution, naturally delicate, would not long endure the harshness of a man, who never knew the value of the gem he possessed.

Mrs. Brummell was the daughter of a cadet of a noble family in the north of England, and had no portion but her beauty and accomplishments. The latter were almost wholly of her own acquiring; for genius rises superior to every disadvantage. While on a visit to a relation of her mother's at Chester, she saw Mr. Brummell, whose obdurate heart owned the power of her charms, and made such proposals as her friends thought would be prudent for her to accept. From their having obtained her father's sanction, the weight of his authority was added to their
E 2 advice.

advice. Young and inexperienced, pressed thus on all sides, she knew not how to act, except by consenting to become Mrs. Brummell; and from that moment she devoted her whole soul to fulfilling the duties of her station: but a mind naturally prone to suspicion can never be wrought upon by openness and candour.

Mr. Brummell did not set out in life to gain a fortune by his own industry; having succeeded to the business of a wealthy uncle, a merchant in Liverpool, with whom he had been brought up, who also left him a considerable sum of money. This enabled him, from his first marrying, to keep a genteel house, servants, &c.; *his wife, his table*—all must be superior to those of his neighbours. At that time Liverpool was a very different place to what it was when I first knew it; and, compared to its present state, one could hardly recognize it, either in regard to houses, manners of the inhabitants, or, in short, in any particular. Poor Mrs. Brummell was accused by those around her of haughtiness, and a disposition to ruin her husband

band by her extravagance. He was pitied for being *taken in* to marry one who brought no portion but a pretty face and her pedigree ; which Mr. Brummell had the vanity to be always recounting, though importuned to the contrary by his humbled, mortified wife.

In the midst of society, and with a heart fraught with every disposition to become its chief ornament, she lived almost alone. Till the birth of the daughter, whose endearing attentions to me first led me to speak of the family, she felt no tie to bind her to earth. From this time she had not a void in her heart ; maternal duties engrossed her mind, and she hoped the endearing appellation of father would awaken in Mr. Brummell some tender emotions. In this, however, she was disappointed. The same instinct that prompts the brute creation to caress their offspring, actuated him : but he went no farther. He liked to hear the infant praised, because it was his : as to any anxiety for her future welfare, he left that entirely to his wife ; it was not his province to con-

sider of such things. When my acquaintance commenced with Miss Brummell, she was barely nineteen; her mother had never been able to raise another child, though her frame was shaken almost to atoms by the disorders attendant on child-bearing; and as every year declined, she expected, before the next, to have finished her mortal career.

Mr. Brummell, by entering largely into the African trade, had realized a considerable fortune, and what gratified him still more, had been almost unanimously chosen by his fellow-citizens to represent his native city in parliament. Emma and her mother trembled at this exaltation, lest, in his ambitious views, she might be sacrificed, in order to have the honour of calling a peer his son-in-law. When he notified to them in form that he had taken a house in a fashionable part of London, where they were to reside the following winter; it had a very different effect on the mind of his daughter than could naturally have been expected from a girl of her age, who had seen little of the world,
and

and who had an allowance sufficiently ample to gratify every wish, with so handsome a fortune in expectation.

Mr. Brummell was a relation of Mrs. Belton's first husband, and as far as two people of such opposite dispositions could assimilate together, the ladies had kept up a familiar intercourse. When I was first at Liverpool this family were at Bath, on account of Mrs. Brummell's health. Emma often told me how much she had regretted her absence, for Mrs. Belton had described me to be so amiable, she longed for the power of judging for herself. I own I did not meet half way the advances of this valuable girl—I dreaded forming intimacies with any one younger than myself. Lady Glanville had frequently pointed out to me the little dependence to be placed on the stability of female friendships; and not till my visit was almost at an end did I do justice to her excellence. She built much on the frequent opportunities we should have of meeting in town, but I warned her not to think me capricious or ungrateful, if these occurred very seldom; for un-

less her mother was a visitor of Lady Glanville's, I could not expect them to come to Grosvenor-square, and my time was too much occupied to permit me to call often at their house. When once become a member of Mrs. Belton's family, I should promise myself much satisfaction in cultivating her acquaintance: but till then I feared I must do violence to my inclination by appearing to slight it. She seemed convinced by these reasons; though she afterwards told me she was sure I did not love her as she did me, or I could not have argued so coolly.

Mrs. Brummell and my relation both approved of our attachment, and my heart led me to be of their opinion: but I recollected that, till my beloved patroness had seen and approved of Emma, I could not consider myself at liberty to style her *ma chère amie*. It would be well, my dear Miss Middleton, if the young women of the present age would, in this point, deign to follow the example of so humble an individual as myself; I am confident half the errors they fall into arise from an injudicious

judicious choice of intimate companions. It is so delightful to think there is a being who interests itself in all our little concerns, and takes no pleasure in which we have not a share—who spends every leisure moment, when absent from us, in expressing what *they* think the effusions of the heart, one cannot wonder that the heated imaginations of youth are captivated by such tokens of friendship. It is fortunate if these ties are broken without leaving the baleful effects of inconsiderate confidence. The loss of a lover is a trivial misfortune when compared to what sometimes happens; and *that*, to a young woman of sensibility, who has suffered an attachment to grow upon her, *may* be an irreparable injury: but the ruin extends much wider. What passes in conversation may be repeated, and we are at liberty to give what credibility to the report we please: but in an intercourse of letters there are proofs to shew the sentiments of the writer, which cannot be disbelieved. While smarting under the effects of a temporary resentment, which perhaps may

been too justly excited, people are apt to treat characters with severity, and sometimes even ridicule, which should never be mentioned except as objects of respect and veneration.

Let those, who are fortunate enough to have sisters, endeavour to make friends of them. Few mothers or elderly female relations have the art of uniting the endearing companion with the friendly monitor. Emma Brummell had such a parent; and I, an outcast in the world---without family, without support, an object of pity to all; had the inexpressible felicity of finding mother, sister, and friend in the person of my ever to be revered benefactress. I hope I always felt grateful for the goodness of the Almighty in conferring so great a blessing on me, and had a proper sense of what I owed in return for such unmerited kindness.



At parting from Mrs. Belton, she made me still handsomer presents than before, and conjured me no longer to postpone becoming her adopted child. When she folded me in her arms, and was more softened

tened than I had ever observed her, my mother rose to my recollection (not that I had any trace of her countenance in my memory but what was acquired from studying a picture which my father had given me). Being the only surviving relation whom I had ever known, I considered her as entitled to the same respect from me as if I had regained a parent, after being long deprived of one; I therefore determined that the future study of my life should be to promote her happiness.

With these resolutions firmly fixed in my mind I met Lady Glanville. As soon as I had an opportunity of being alone with her, I told her that she must not be offended if I endeavoured to wean myself both from her and my sweet girls. As they would go into company more frequently than they had hitherto done, I hoped this would be practicable, as I could then pass a great deal of my time in my own apartment. This, she assured me, would defeat her intentions; for wherever her daughters went, she meant that I should accompany them, in order

that I might get rid of that *mauvaise bonte* of which my Lancashire acquaintance complained. When I was about to expostulate with her ladyship, she said she knew perfectly well what I would say : but as all her friends were apprized of the fortunate change in my circumstances, I should no longer be considered as the governess of her daughters, but as a friend who had obliged her by consenting to pass the winter in town with her.

I was confident this mark of attention from Lady Glanville would not only gratify Mrs. Belton, but be of considerable service to me in future, provided she still continued the same disposition towards me in money matters. To doubt her sincerity, or to express such sentiments, if I entertained them, to Lady Glanville, would have been equally improper ; yet I could never suffer myself to dwell on the probability of my becoming heiress to such wealth. One thing took firm possession of my mind, and that was ; if I ever had the power, it would be both my duty and inclination to repair the injury done to the family

family of the brother of Mr. Belton, who, by his very injudicious marriage-settlement, were excluded from any share of his landed property. By his will, it is true, a considerable sum was bequeathed to them : but owing to losses in trade, when the personal estate was disposed of, and all debts paid, a very trifling overplus remained to pay their legacy with. All the property being of Mr. Belton's own acquiring, he undoubtedly had a right to dispose of it as he thought proper. It could not, however, be for a moment admitted, that his intentions were to impoverish his own relations, in order that his widow might aggrandize an individual whom he had never seen nor heard of, and who had no claim upon his generosity beyond that of an indifferent person unprovided for.

I was old enough to see the folly of aspiring above what I really was. Going with Lady Glanville into public would never make me a woman of rank or fortune ; and if, notwithstanding my present prospects, it should ever be necessary for me to return to the obscurity from whence
I came,

I came, it would not tend to make retirement unpleasant, having been permitted to partake of amusements then out of my reach ; on the contrary, the recollection might beguile a lonely hour ; and, from never having conceived myself entitled to enjoy such distinction while in full possession of it, the deprivation would be little regretted.

This was an uncommon mode of thinking, you will say, at three-and-twenty ; but consider, my dear, the influence that a passion, cherished in early life, from the first moment without hope, unwittingly gains upon the mind. Convinced that I could never be any thing to Edward Glanville, I was indifferent as to what became of me. To endeavour to avoid him, and to crush in the bud every ray of hope he might entertain, was the ruling principle that actuated me ; it was this prompted me to attend to Mrs. Belton's first notice. To leave Lady-Glanville, without her having suspected *my* weakness, or her son's pursuit, was an object to be attained by every effort in my power.

You

You have seen the pains I took to reconcile myself to a separation from this family, and to think, with sentiments adequate to the benefits received, of that to which I was so shortly to belong.

As Mr. Glanville was not expected in England till long after the time fixed for my relinquishing the care of his sisters, I cared little who I saw, or to whom I was introduced. I however thought it necessary to communicate Lady Glanville's wishes, respecting my introduction, to Mrs. Belton, who approved highly of them, and desired that I would appear as became her relation, for she intended coming up to town herself, in order to take me home with her, and should be displeased if she had not some bills to discharge for me. Her bounty, added to my own income, made this wholly unnecessary. The wish expressed by her serves to shew how truly desirous she was that my *debüt* should proclaim me wealthy.

CHAP. VII.

" 'There is a Divinity that shapes our ends,
" 'Rough-hew' them how we will.'"

SHAKESPEARE.

Soon after we were fixed in town I received a most affectionate billet from Emma Brummell, acquainting me that they were just arrived in Percy-street, and hoped Lady Glanville would soon grant me permission to come to them, for neither her mother nor herself knew how to determine on any thing till they had first seen and consulted with me ; adding, that her father urged them to send for milliners, &c. as he expected many of his acquaintance would be calling upon them, as soon as it was known he was come to town. This pomposity was so like that of a newly-elected member, who fancied the consequence he possessed at *home* would follow him to the metropolis ! Whether
this

this was the case or not, the ladies of his family suffered equally by his eagerness to display them as he would his new carriage, or sideboard of plate.

I had explained to Lady Glanville my acquaintance with Emma, and my desire to have her opinion of her before I entered on too great an intimacy. She smiled at my circumspection, though she highly approved of it; and when I received the note, told me I should have the carriage, to go to her that evening, and requested that she would call on me the next or following morning, when her ladyship would make a point of being in the way to see her. Mrs. Brummell welcomed me with almost as much warmth as her daughter. I arranged every matter for them in which my assistance was at all required, though I avoided promising to be much with them; for now that my engagements abroad were more numerous, I had less time than ever to myself. I was apprehensive that Sir Henry, who possessed no small share of family pride, might object to Emma's coming much to his house, lest his daughters

ters might form an acquaintance with her, which perhaps would militate against his ideas of the *very select circle* he wished them to move in, on their introduction into the world.

How my heart bounded with delight when Lady Glanville told me that Emma's manner and appearance had prepossessed her much in her favour ! and that on mentioning her father to Sir Henry, he spoke of him as a most respectable man, and also that in his youth he had been acquainted with some of Mrs. Brummell's relations, who were people of unexampled probity and worth, which was one cause of their not rising into notice, the pride of birth preventing them from entering into trade ; and not being able to afford the expence attendant on a learned profession, the army and navy were the only channels open to them. Procuring each individual a commission was all their great connexions would take the trouble of doing ; and without interest in both of these professions, it is well known there is very little chance of advancement.

Mrs.

Mrs. Brummell's father was an officer in the navy, who fought bravely for his country, and died in consequence of a wound received in an engagement with a vessel of superior force to his own. This circumstance, to a man of Sir Henry's loyal principles, prompted him to view the daughter in an interesting light; and as, from her marriage with Mr. Brummell, added to her own good conduct, she held a rank in society which made it not inconsistent for Lady Glanville to visit her, he desired that she might follow the dictates of her own inclination. This permission, so voluntarily granted, pleased Lady Glanville, who told me how earnestly she wished it to be known, in the circle where I was going, the high estimation in which I was held in her family.

We now frequently met, and Sir Henry himself waited on Mr. Brummell. His paying this compliment was in consequence of their taking the same side in politics; for had Mr. Brummell been in opposition, though Sir Henry would not have objected to the families forming as intimate

intimate an acquaintance as they pleased, yet no inducement could have prevailed on him to enter into it.

Emma attracted a good deal of attention. She was elegant in her person and manners, with a fine countenance, though not a regular set of features. Lady Glanville took her to several places with her own daughters, when Mrs. Brummell, from indisposition, was obliged to remain at home. The compliments paid her on *chaperoning* three such women, on their first appearance, were very profuse.

Miss Glanville was a beauty of a different cast. She had the sparkling eye and brunette complexion of her mother, with something more *piquante* about her than even in her bloom she could ever have possessed : but her figure wanted her majesty as well as height. Maria was dazzlingly fair, with mild blue eyes, curling flaxen hair, and a timidity that shrunk from every touch.

Emma and Miss Glanville would often enter into conversation with the gentlemen who addressed them, without thinking

ing it necessary to look to Lady Glanville or myself for a sanction: but Maria durst not move from us: she clung to me, indeed, as if fearful of losing me. Her sensibility was so great, I could not attempt to check this impulse; for a word, uttered with a grave tone, would bring tears into her eyes. Charles tormented her not a little, and enjoyed the confusion he threw her into. He complained to his mother, between jest and earnest, that I spoiled the girl by my indulgence. Could I view *her* innocent terrors, and know myself the object of her warmest affections, and not endeavour to alleviate them, without wounding her delicacy?

As we were all musically inclined, we sometimes formed little concerts among ourselves. Miss Glanville presided at the harpsichord, Charles took the flute or violin, while Emma, Maria, and myself, were the singers. Sir Henry played on the violoncello with great taste. When he favoured us with his company, all went on well: but without him it was so much Charles's delight to put his youngest sister out of tune, and then to praise her for keeping

keeping her temper, that instead of harmony, we produced little else but discords. Not having any of the *cognoscenti* of the party, these occurrences did not affect us very much, for Lady Glanville bore all her son's follies with great good-humour.

At one of these family meetings I thought I discovered something of passion in Charles's manner to Emma. She appeared insensible of it herself, therefore I chose not to hint my suspicions to her, though I resolved to observe him more narrowly than I had hitherto done. To common observers it would have appeared a very desirable connexion for Mr. Brummell's daughter, and not a disadvantageous one for Sir Henry's second son, unless want of family connexions would be sufficient to outweigh every other consideration. I, who knew there was a possibility of this being started by my friends, and that Mr. Brummell's plan was, most likely, to marry his daughter to a title, without taking the personal or mental qualifications into consideration, felt it incumbent on me to prevent Emma,

at

at least, from conceiving a regard for Charles, of a more tender nature than was justifiable as an acquaintance of the season.

In the midst of these domestic enjoyments Lady Glanville would sigh for her beloved son's return. Notwithstanding her determination to make no distinctions, Mr. Glanville was evidently her favourite. His pensiveness was certainly more calculated to awaken tender emotions than the vivacity of Charles. With him every one must be enlivened, and from his happy disposition, he seemed to stand in need of no support; while his brother, who felt every thing keenly, solicited sympathy, though none could penetrate the source from whence his sorrows flowed; for to every observer he seemed born to enjoy what he most wished.

In our *tête-à-têtes*, Lady Glanville expressed herself in this manner respecting her two sons. Miss Glanville found all she wished in a brother, when in the society of Charles; while Maria, to whom his railery was principally directed, perpetually exclaimed, "Ah! if Edward were here,
you

you durst not plague me so—I should have a friend in him. Indeed when Miss Williams goes, I shall have none left, unless he comes to supply her place.” Then with the most perfect innocence she would look in my face, and say, “ Surely you will not leave your own Maria till he does ?” Folding her in my arms, and embracing her with the fervour of affection she deserved, prevented me from betraying the effect of words uttered by her, without any meaning but simply what they expressed ; though to me they touched upon a string too tender to admit of replying.

Emma continued to be of all our parties. I told her she must prepare for a lover, for I understood her father was busily employed in a matrimonial negociation for her. Though I was not certain that my information was accurate, I thought some hint of this kind necessary, lest, from having lately experienced so little of her father’s austerity, she might begin to lose the recollection of the implicit obedience he expected from her in the article of marriage. I found the idea painful to her,
and

and endeavoured to probe her still further, by observing she would have little reason to complain of her father's choice, if all I heard was true. The next evening, when her mother was to have a card-assembly, to which our family were invited, I promised to tell her more. I took my leave directly, saying I had already outstaid my time, unwilling to give her an opportunity of repining at her hard fate in not being permitted to chuse for herself, which I saw was hovering on her lips.

When we were preparing for the party at Mr. Brummell's, I thought Maria unusually grave ; but never was she more lovely, an interesting languor overspread her fine features, that made her something more than human.

When I observed she wanted spirits for the evening, " Indeed, my dear friend," said she, " if it were possible to make an excuse, I would rather stay at home : but I know you would too, and then I should deprive you of a great deal of pleasure, and make both mamma and Miss Brummell angry with me for keeping you from

them ; so I will try to exert myself."—
"You are very good, my sweet girl," said I, "to think of me ; and to reward you for your kindness, I will insist upon Charles's promising not to tease you."—
"Then you will confer a great obligation ; for when I am not in high spirits, it is the dread of his remarks that overpowers me, and makes me think I must look so like a fool to strangers."

When I reflected on this young creature's susceptibility, I trembled for her future happiness, and regretted that I could not always be near her, for I saw she could never confide in her sister as she did in me.

Miss Glanville had no weaknesses herself, therefore she knew not how to allow for them in others, though I believe, even in the tenderest point, she would have preferred securing her sister's felicity to her own, if, by making any sacrifice on her part, it was likely to be promoted. In short, there could not be a more united family ; for the moment Charles was convinced his pleasantries wounded his younger
sister

sister, he adopted another mode of behaviour to her, and thanked me in the warmest terms for my advice; as he saw how different a character she was, when left to follow the impulse of her own mind; for that was too pure to lead her into error.

Considering ourselves quite at home in Percy-street, Lady Glanville proposed going earlier than the company were expected to assemble, that we might have some chance of conversing with Mrs. Brummell, whose ill health seldom permitted her to come abroad. Dreading Emma's impatience to know what I had given her reason to believe I should communicate this evening, I avoided her questions, by saying she must assist me in giving courage to Maria, who was so unwell, she hardly knew how she should be able to acquit herself. Emma's kind heart was soon occupied by a desire to amuse her young friend; her own cares were forgotten; and she no longer sought to speak to me alone. In short, they attached themselves to each other for the evening.

When a number of people were collected, I met with the lady who had taught me to expect that Mr. Brummell meant to introduce his future son-in-law to his family, among the company of the evening. Very soon my Lord Darnley was announced. My heart palpitated at the sound. The entrance but of one other person could have made my pulse beat quicker. All my apprehensions vanished when I saw him. He paid his compliments with such unaffected ease, was so truly the polished gentleman in his manners, without any of that superciliousness so conspicuous in many of our young noblemen, that I could hardly help exclaiming, "Emma, your father is as much interested in your happiness as I am, or he would not have taken such pains in selecting a husband for you."

Mr. Brummell soon led his lordship to the part of the room where the two friends were seated, and without distinguishing them, repeated, "My Lord Darnley—my daughter and Miss Maria Glanville."

Though

Though the most common observer would have discerned the embarrassment of his lordship, Mr. Brummell was altogether ignorant of it—stalking away with a degree of self-complacency that must have been seen, to be fully understood.

Whether it was that the blind goddess determined Mr. Brummell should himself be the means of defeating his plans for aggrandizing his family, or that his lordship was irresistibly impelled to Maria--- but the fact was, he seated himself by her, and endeavoured, in the most insinuating manner, to lead her into conversation. Emma, it is true, bore her part, for her companion's diffidence increased in proportion to the attention paid her. Natural politeness induced his lordship to address them both; but his whole thoughts and soul, if one might judge from the language of the eyes, were rivetted to Maria.

As a spectator I observed, with great minuteness, all that was passing; for in such crowds I seldom took a part, contenting myself with hearing the praises of my friends, in which I took too warm an

interest, ever to omit an opportunity of adding my tribute to those of others.

I was now joined by Charles, who said he had expected to find us in the music-room. Would I unite my intreaties with his, to prevail on Miss Brummell and his sister to go there, for he had assured some of the company his influence should be exerted to accomplish that point? Though I am not very fond of young women exerting themselves to please the public, yet I had no objection to their playing and singing for half an hour, particularly as I knew Mr. Brummell would thank me for giving his daughter an opportunity of displaying one of her accomplishments.

We took our differet parts as they were assigned us at home, with this difference, that Emma accompanied herself on the harpsichord. Maria's sweet pipe was never half so pathetic. Our music was plaintive, and it seemed to suit the particular frame of her mind. She hung on my arm, while I endeavoured to give her courage. My calling her Maria, and Miss Glanville

Glanvile her sister, seemed to startle his lordship. I could no longer suffer him to remain in error, but addressed Emma as Miss Brummell. His brow was instantly overcast. The scrutinizing look he bestowed on me can never be forgotten; it seemed to express "I thank you, although I am more disposed to hate you, for destroying an illusion so flattering to the senses." With a mortified air he turned to Miss Glanvile, praised her taste in singing, and then ventured to pay some forced compliment to Emma, which she received coldly enough, for at that moment Charles had brought a new song, which he wished her to look over.

When I looked at Miss Glanvile, I thought her the most to be envied of the groupe; for though I could not suppose Maria weak enough to have received any impression from the attentions of an hour, yet I looked forward to many sources of uneasiness for her in his lordship's assiduities, when she would be informed Emma had a claim to them. As to Charles and

herself, it was evident they had gone too far in a mutual attachment ever to draw back, without opening wounds not easily closed. His lordship had unwittingly been led into an error that might give a different turn to his views, having, till he saw Maria, had no intention of opposing those of his father.

On what a slight foundation is human happiness built! To-day we look forward with pleasure to an event that, to-morrow, the bare idea of its happening overwhelms us with grief. This was exactly Lord Darnley's situation. His father wished him to marry. Having run his estate considerably in debt, he hoped to retrieve it by uniting his son to an heiress, who, besides bringing a large portion, would not lead him to launch out into an expensive mode of living, by being herself of a dissipated turn.

Looking out for parliamentary interest in the county of Lancaster, which he wished to represent, he had heard much of Mr. Brummell's influence, and had obtained an introduction, with the hope of winning

winning him over to his side. The attentions of an earl were gratifying to Mr. Brummell, but at the same time he wished it to be understood that he was not wholly a *plebeian*, by relating his wife's near alliance to the family of— in Northumberland. This led the earl to inquire if he had any family. On being told an only daughter, his policy immediately suggested to him that this connexion might be a beneficial one, though he was wary enough not to make a proposal till their intimacy might in some degree authorize it. In the mean time he lost no opportunity of cultivating Mr. Brummell's good opinion, by the most servile adulation. This the worthy merchant took as a tribute due to his own consequence as a politician and a member of the senate. When the real business was unfolded, the earl's schemes were entered into with all the eagerness he could desire. Lord Darnley having no repugnance to matrimony, or any prior attachment, considered the plan a good one, though his delicacy would not

permit him to be introduced into Mr. Brummell's family on any other footing than as an acquaintance. Having heard some gentlemen mention Emma as an elegant girl whom they had seen at the opera with Lady Glanville, he began to think himself a fortunate man, and was impatient to see her. Our humble Maria, who thought not of conquest or of herself, most unluckily caught his eye the moment he entered the room; he complimented himself on his penetration when Mr. Brummell led him to where she was sitting, and without once thinking of Emma, who in general was deemed more attractive, he looked to Maria as the arbitress of his fate.

You will wonder at Mr. Brummell's want of accuracy in the introduction: but this was so like the man; whatever was his he imagined so superior, as at once to be acknowledged as such by the rest of the world; and without a spark of proper affection for his daughter, would have entered the lists with any man who did
not

not allow that her beauty and accomplishments surpassed those of her companions.

To trace the various incidents which led to a discovery of Charles's attachment to Emma, and his lordship's unwillingness to pursue the plan sketched for him by his father, would be tedious: suffice it to say, that the latter seized every opportunity of seeing and conversing with Maria, in order to assure himself of not being disagreeable to her. This done, he, with an openness which ever characterised him, disclosed his real situation to the earl, who, though much hurt at being thus baffled by a pretty face (to use his own words) was not at all displeased at hearing, that along with it there were such respectable family connexions; and although as considerable a fortune as Mr. Brummell's daughter was not to be expected, yet one not at all to be contemned.

Lord Darnley's coldness did not pass unnoticed by Mr. Brummell, who being somewhat nettled at it, the way was paved

for the earl's explanation of his son's conduct. For once in his life the man of wealth had submitted to controul, which spared him some mortification. Lord Darnley having, in the opening of the negotiation, insisted, as a preliminary, that no mention should be made to the lady of his intentions, till he thought himself in some degree certain of her approving them; the family of Mr. Brummell were therefore not likely to know that he had been thwarted in a favourite pursuit. The earl's polite attentions, and offers of future friendship, softened him so much, he lost sight of the affront his daughter's charms had received; and when the earl hoped both his son and himself might still consider him as their friend, he most cordially gave him his hand, with an assurance that they might rely upon his best services when occasion offered.

Had Mr. Brummell imagined, that with Lord Darnley he lost all hope of calling a peer his son, he would, without doubt, have been much enraged: but the idea
never

never entered his mind. He consoled himself with the recollection that he was only an Irish peer, and not eligible to sit in the house of lords, while the next candidate might have that additional qualification to recommend him.

This conference being at an end, the earl, at the request of his son, made proposals to Sir Henry respecting Maria, who had almost lost her heart without knowing what *la belle passion* meant. Sir Henry received him with politeness, but went no further. His daughter was very young; it was impossible for her to judge, at such an age, on so important a point. Lord Darnley's character and connexions might lead him to look to the first families in the kingdom, who, no doubt, would be proud of his alliance; on this score he would be admitted to visit in Grosvenor-square. But without entering into any promise on Sir Henry's part to support his pretensions, unless on an intimate acquaintance, Lady Glanville and himself thought he was likely to insure
their

their daughter's happiness. His lordship wished for nothing more, as he was confident his son would be proud of the honour of being admitted into the Glanville family, on the terms now prescribed.

CHAP. VIII.

“ Though parting be a fretful corrosive, it is applied
“ to a deathful wound.”

SHAKESPEARE.

EMMA, thus rid of her ideal lover, of whose intentions she had never heard but from myself, began seriously to examine her own heart with regard to Charles, who, during all this time, made no declaration of his sentiments ; though one must have had as little penetration as Mr. Brummell, not to perceive that he existed but in her presence.

My own bosom torn by a thousand conflicting emotions which I durst never reveal to another, I was fated to be the confidant on all sides ; for Emma's hopes and fears were disclosed to me, and Lady Glanville, by Sir Henry's desire, immediately mentioned Lord Darnley's *penchant* for my fair ward, though it was not to be
com-

communicated to herself or any other person.

“Here at least,” sighed I, “is a prospect of one pair being made happy. Lord Darnley and Maria are worthy of each other, and have inspired a mutual passion which there is no probability of any untoward event blighting: but Emma and Charles—what is to become of them? The latter, too, by his procrastination, seems hardly to deserve the affection with which he is honoured.

In the midst of these reflections I was interrupted by the very person who was the subject of them; for Charles entered the library with so pensive an air, that I could hardly keep from laughing, it became him so ill, and was so unlike his usual way of accosting me.

I could not, however, indulge this vein, from his instantaneously bespeaking my pity, and requesting my interference in his behalf; for he knew not what would become of him, if there were no hope of his obtaining Emma—his beloved Emma, who, ever since he first became acquainted
with


with her, had continued to rise in his estimation. I asked him if he had any reason to believe she thought favourably of him: but this, he assured me, he had in vain endeavoured to ascertain, though he owned he had never perceived her shew a decided preference to any one else; yet he could not help being apprehensive lest, among the number of her admirers, some one, of superior pretensions to himself, would inspire her with favourable sentiments towards him, and thus crush his aspiring hopes. I assured him that, with my friend, rank or fortune would have little weight; her father, however, would judge differently; and indeed I believed a title of consequence would, in his mind, outweigh most other considerations. His only plan would be to pay *him* the most unremitting attention, in order to secure, if possible, his good opinion; and when he remembered the reward that probably awaited his labours, I trusted he would think no time or pains bestowed in attaining it too great. He promised to follow my advice, though I cautioned him against
forming

forming any resolution without first knowing if Sir Henry had no other views for him. He said he had satisfied himself on that score, neither would he have failed in immediately acquainting his father with his attachment, if he had not dreaded a refusal from the lady ; and also being ignorant of Mr. Brummell's dispositions towards him, it appeared more prudent to postpone communicating his wishes to Sir Henry, whose pride would so ill brook any objections being started by Mr. Brummell, that he might be tempted to break off the connexion between the families, which would be a severe mortification ; for much as he loved the lady, he could not think of subjecting her to a father's anger.

I applauded these sentiments, and assured him of my friendship, though I feared little was in my power ; for however Emma might regard my opinion, he must be certain it was too nice a point for me to attempt to bias her upon ; neither was I sure that advice could ever, with any propriety, be given unasked ; should she, however, think me worthy of such

such a mark of confidence, I should not lose sight of the conversation of this morning. He was going to say something more, but I feared our *tête-à-tête* might be remarked, and therefore left him, saying, Lady Glanville expected me.

To this worthy mother I instantly considered the wishes of her son, for I knew no person so likely to advance his interest; besides, without this I almost accused myself of carrying on a clandestine correspondence; a proceeding above all others which my soul most abhorred. She was pleased with Charles's choice, though she could not see in the same light I did, the little probability of obtaining Mr. Brummell's consent: she thought *his* prejudices were at least no more to be dreaded than those of Sir Henry, who she feared might consider want of family connexions an obstacle, though she doubted not that her influence could combat them. "You forget, my dear madam," said I, "that on one side you have a man of sense and feeling to deal with; on the other, a being who possesses none of the latter quality, and no great portion of the first; who is
also

 also obstinate as a mule, and though blest with one of the first of women for his own wife, regards the sex as created for the purpose of being subservient to the will of man, and who are, on no account, to be suffered to have an opinion of their own, but to follow implicitly whatever their lords and masters think proper for them to do.

“ It is true, my dear Caroline, I am a stranger to such a character, except in books ; and now that I am convinced it exists, I can scarce believe that a rational creature will, of his own accord, deprive himself of the comforts he might derive from the society and conversation of two such women as Mrs. Brummell and her amiable daughter. If the injustice rested here, we should rejoice at his being thus his own tormenter ; but when we see that angelic woman on the verge of the grave, and know she is brought to it by his harshness, and that the dread of what her daughter may have to endure when she is no more adds to the poignancy of what she suffers, we are ready to exclaim at the
peculiar

peculiar hardship of her fate. On reflecting that all is ordered by an all-seeing hand, we must believe, that what to our imperfect comprehension appears unjust may be absolutely necessary for promoting her felicity in another world. The comfort and satisfaction she feels in seeing all her hopes and wishes realized in Emma, should repay her for a thousand anxious cares ; indeed she knows the value of such a daughter, who, on the other hand, is fully sensible of the obligations she is under to her, not only for the kindness and affection she daily experiences, but the great pains that, in spite of ill health, and her father's caprices, she has taken to have her education properly attended to." Here she exclaimed, " Caroline, my son must not lose this girl ! she is too valuable to be thrown away on some mercenary wretch, who would marry her for her portion, regardless of every other attraction ; and yet, who knows if the father will not suspect that *money* is also our object, should we appear too anxious about her. If such a thing were to be surmised to Sir Henry,

Henry, he would forbid this man of wealth his presence, and on no pretext whatever could be brought to give his consent to Charles's continuing the pursuit ; it behoves us, therefore, to act with great circumspection."

Before I saw my friend again, I found Charles had told his *tender tale*, and that his mistress had not suffered him wholly to despair, though the alarming state of her mother's health left her little leisure to think of any thing in which she was not immediately interested.

By Lady Glanville's desire I remained altogether in Percy-street. Emma's exertions to repress her emotions when in the presence of her mother, were so great, it was impossible she could support it ; I therefore insisted on her retiring to repose, while I watched in her room. The piety and resignation of this valuable woman made an impression on my mind never to be erased ; though she must have been conscious of having fulfilled the duties allotted her in the most exemplary manner, and of sustaining trials which few besides

sides herself could have gone through without repining. She talked and acted as if her imperfections had been very great, and her thankfulness to God not sufficiently strong. I ventured to request Mr. Brummell's attendance one evening, after I had prevailed on Emma to retire to rest.

I flatter myself her conversation had some effect upon him, for from that moment he considered her in extreme danger, though before he had always said, "She will recover, we have often seen her in this state at Liverpool."

A very few days terminated her mortal career. Her latter end was truly that of the righteous. May you and I, my dear Miss Middleton, and those we love best, meet the hour of dissolution with the same fortitude and calmness.

To paint Emma's distraction at this melancholy event would be painful both to you and myself: your feeling heart will easily picture the poignancy of the grief which for some time pervaded her bosom. Her father convinced us he had more susceptibility than we had hitherto believed;
the

the recollection of his own harsh conduct towards so valuable a woman, I am confident, bore hard upon him. When I told him she had died during the night, without a struggle, and that her last moments were occupied in praying to the Almighty to bless him and her child,—“ You are sure she forgave me then?” replied he eagerly, grasping my hand while he spoke. “ Most assuredly, Sir ; and most ardently did she hope, that in her daughter’s filial attentions you would receive that comfort which is sought in vain, if not found in the bosom of one’s own family.” He broke from me with so much contrition in his countenance, and so agitated a step, that I augured much good to my dear Emma, should the impression be lasting. From his subsequent conduct I had reason to believe it was so, and that, however obdurate a heart may be, there are undoubtedly times and seasons when they may be made to feel.

All our house united in their attentions to Mr. and Miss Brummell on this trying occasion. Sir Henry, who always con-
sidered

sidered himself much interested in Mrs. Brummell, from having formerly known her family, and respected them, was more affected than one could have imagined; by his desire, Lady Glanville was to request Mr. Brummell to allow Emma to spend part of the summer with them at Mistlewood, as he thought, from the profound melancholy in which she appeared to be plunged, it might be dangerous for her to return to a house where every object would remind her of the heavy loss she had sustained.

I was certain this excursion would be pleasing to Emma, and that, without looking forward to consequences, both Charles and herself would be delighted at the prospect of being under one roof. At this time I therefore deviated from my usual maxim, that of withholding my advice till it was solicited, though I feared in giving it, I might be accused of selfishness; for as it was settled that I went to Mrs. Belton at the time the Glanvilles set out for Wales, if Emma remained with her father, I should enjoy her society; on the contrary, if she accompanied them, we

were to be separated at the time, of all others, that she could be of most use to me, in the new circle to which I must from henceforth to look upon myself as belonging.

I know not how I acquired this degree of resolution, unless it was the having felt, at a very early age, that on myself my future establishment would in a great measure depend; this it was that deterred me from hastily contracting either attachments or friendships; but having once formed them, no personal consideration, or fear of misrepresentation, could ever induce me to swerve from the line of conduct which I conceived it my duty to adopt.

Knowing that Lady Glanville would take the earliest opportunity of enforcing Sir Henry's request, I instantly sat down and wrote to Emma what my sentiments were on the subject. I preferred this mode of expressing them to conversation, for several reasons: first, because she would be under the necessity of listening to all I had to say without interruption; and, if inclined to doubt my sincerity, the confidence I placed

placed in her, by giving her the power of communicating what I wrote both to Lady Glanville and Charles, would immediately convince her that I had only her happiness in view.

I had yet a more powerful inducement; as, while the scene was so recent in our remembrance, I durst not trust myself to speak of it; this was to remind her of the charges she received from her dying mother, to endeavour to conciliate her father's affections, and, by unremitting attention on her part, lead him to do justice to her worth. I then spoke of the effect which my communication of her mother's death had upon him, and the hopes I entertained of her being able to accomplish so desirable a change in his disposition towards her, as might lead to obtaining his consent to an union with Charles. Yet, if she quitted him at a time when he stood in need of consolation, to seek it from strangers, all these must be crushed; as there doubtless were a number of officious beings who would seize this opportunity of ingratiating themselves into his favour, by

senting her conduct as improper, in preferring the society of a family whom she had only known in consequence of her visit to London, instead of endeavouring to make home pleasant to him.

I concluded with assuring her, that should my arguments prove unavailing, no person should know they had ever been made use of; and I would, as far as lay in my power during her absence, counteract any designs which I might suspect of being formed to her prejudice.

In the evening she called upon me, when I found her not only disposed to take my counsel in good part, but so affected at my imagining she could act contrary to my advice and opinion, I scarcely knew how to pacify her. "I give myself up into your hands, my inestimable friend," said she, "do with me what you will; for in every particular I find you rise so superior to me, that I am determined to have no guide but you." After her transports had subsided, and we could converse calmly together, I found her inclinations would have led her to go with Lady Glanville

Glanvile, and that if I had not used very strong language it is probable I should not have prevailed. I firmly believe the hope of being able, in the end, to work upon her father to consent to her marrying the object on whom her affections were placed, which otherwise she was not likely to accomplish, operated more powerfully than any other of the reasons I had given: so unbounded a dominion does this same God of Love exercise on his votaries.

In the midst of these scenes you are desirous, no doubt, of knowing how Maria and her admirer proceeded and what became of Miss Glanvile, who has hitherto made so little figure in the canvass: had this lady been called upon to act in scenes of difficulty, I am confident she would have acquitted herself with great credit, but as yet she had nothing to encounter. Now that Charles had become an *inamorato*, she began to wish for the return of her elder brother; in the mean time found sufficient amusement in cultivating her talents and indulging a taste for reading, which she very early imbibed; her conversation

versation shewed this, though there was not the smallest tincture of pedantry, or, what is still less endurable, that affectation of *sentiment* for which so many of our literary ladies are remarkable.

Maria wanted support more than her sister, which was the reason of my attaching myself to her in preference, though certainly, of the two, the elder was by far the most accomplished woman. Emma saw and felt this, and had the folly (for I can give it no other name) to wonder at Lord Darnley's being attracted by her instead of Lucy; on the contrary, it would have been surprising if he had; for Miss Glanville's manner and Emma's bore a striking resemblance to each other: you saw they had not been long in company, but you could likewise discern that they acted from their own judgment, and stood in need of no other guide than what natural good sense afforded them; here then there was no contrast.

Mr. Brummell's daughter, a wealthy heiress, and the choice of his father, would never have been eclipsed by Miss Glanville;

Glanville ; it was the retiring, modest, diffident Maria, who trembled at every word she uttered, fearing lest she had committed some error that awakened his Lordship's sympathy : on a nearer acquaintance, the conviction that this proceeded from native simplicity, riveted his affections. It is wonderful how these lords of the creation are gratified by feeling themselves of consequence !

Maria, who had till now passed unnoticed, knew not how to conceal the pleasure she received from the attentions of Lord Darnley ; and finding no one inclined to restrain her, soon fell into the habit of asking his opinion, as she had been accustomed to do of all those who formed her domestic circle. Without being conscious of it, she thus contributed to raise Lord Darnley in his own estimation, and consequently made him think highly of her penetration.

Thus mutually pleased with each other, Sir Henry and her Ladyship no longer hesitated to declare their approbation of his suit ; though, till after the arrival of Mr. Glanville, it was agreed by all parties

the nuptials were not to be celebrated, and as he was shortly expected, Sir Henry determined not to leave London till he came.

My good friend Mrs. Belton began to be very anxious for my coming to her, a fit of the gout preventing her from adhering to her original intention of coming to London, in order to take me down with her. Mr. and Miss Brummell having requested me to accompany them, I thought delaying my departure would be to run the risk of disobliging my relation, by testifying an unwillingness to accept her offers of protection.

The time thus long expected being now arrived, how many struggles had I to endure ! all conjuring me to stay, except her ladyship, who though she wished me to remain perhaps more than any of them, as in the event of her children marrying, my society would have been of more consequence to her than ever ; yet she forbore from saying one word, knowing my resolution to be fixed, and that no entreaties could induce me to swerve from it.

Maria

Maria wept without ceasing: "Surely," she would say, sobbing aloud; "nothing could happen so unlucky, at the very time I stand most in need of your assistance; when they are going to marry me, to lose the support I have always received from you: who will bear with me when you are gone?" This innocent affected me more than I can express; though I was confident, in the new ties she was soon to form, her dear Miss Williams would shortly be forgotten.

Miss Glanville was as affectionate as ever, and hoped always to be favoured with my correspondence.

Sir Henry, too, behaved with the affection of a father; Charles that of a kind brother. All this, reason and philosophy could teach me to bear, but in separating from Lady Glanville I seemed to deprive myself of the only charm life had: the idea was insupportable; my brain turned round; in this delirium I fell into the arms of Emma, whose trembling assiduities could hardly recall me to life.

When I awoke and found myself still in the mansion of my more than mother, I insisted upon seeing her once more : had this request been denied, I know not what might have ensued. She flew to me, and permitted me to gaze on her for some moments without speaking ; then taking me by the hand,—“ Why, my beloved Caroline, did you force me to consent to your leaving me, when now, that the hour of separation is arrived, your tender frame can hardly support itself to bid me adieu ! ” This recalled my scattered senses ; Edward Glanville rose to my view ; with his image my fortitude returned ; I fell on her neck, wept, embraced her, and pronounced the word *farewell* !

The presence of Mr. Brummell was a restraint on Emma and myself, perhaps it was well for us both ; for me I am confident it was, for in the fullness of my heart I should have betrayed the secret which for so many years had been inviolably kept. Emma has, however, often lamented that at this time we were not alone ; she is certain I would have poured out my whole

whole soul to her, and that, by this disclosure, many untoward events would have been prevented, as well as a much larger portion of happiness fallen to my lot, that it is likely I ever merited.

Mr. Brummell was extremely attentive to us both; I remarked, with pleasure, the change so visible in his manners, and endeavoured to strengthen him in such good habits by frequently leading him into serious conversation. They set me down at Mrs. Belton's before they went home themselves. I found this lady far better than I expected, and much pleased to see me.

As soon as our friends left us she eagerly told me how much she felt herself obliged to Lady Glanville, for having introduced me into company in the style she had done.

I had been noticed, it seems, in her ladyship's suite, by some of the first people both of Shrewsbury and Liverpool, who chanced to be in London that year, and those who heard of this knew they could not gratify my relation more than by founding my praises. The solid advan-

rages I had derived from being so long admitted to the most unreserved intimacy with the first of women; it is true, were known but to few; had they, however, been displayed in the most lively colours, the relation would not have exalted me so much in the eyes of the generality of mankind, as the trivial circumstance of my accompanying her to a few public places.

CHAP. IX.

"I know I love in vain ; strive against hope ; yet
" in this captious and intenible sieve, I still pour
" in the waters of my love."

SHAKESPEARE.

THE next morning Mrs. Belton told me she had fitted up an apartment which I was to consider solely as my own : knowing my fondness for reading, she had asked the assistance of a friend in selecting a few books, but she had left the completing of the collection to my own taste.

At the same time she gave me a deed, by which I found myself entitled to two hundred pounds a-year, secured to me in such a manner as to deprive her of the power of revoking it. This generosity overpowered me ; and I determined, by every exertion in my power, to convince her that the gift was not unworthily bestowed. On learning that there was a secretaire and implements for writing in my apartment, I hastened thither.

ploy my first leisure moment in writing to Lady Glanville ; but from this I was in some measure prevented by stopping to survey the elegance with which my *library* was fitted up.

Mrs. Belton had heard me inveigh against heavy ornaments and massy furniture, and with a delicacy of which I had not conceived her capable, consulted my taste in decorating the place where she supposed I would spend most of my leisure hours. At the time I forgot what induced me to go there, so much did gratitude take possession of me. After having returned to pay my acknowledgments to Mrs. Belton, I resumed my first intention ; in writing to Lady Glanville I became, in imagination, an inhabitant of her house, and not very capable of entering into the interests of any family but hers.

Emma came to enquire after me, though her visit was a very short one, domestic arrangements, after so long an absence, requiring a great portion of her time. She hoped Mrs. Belton did not mean to engross me wholly, as her father approved
so

so highly of our being together, and as she received so much satisfaction from my society. Mrs. Belton owned she would be a little selfish at first, but promised that I should follow my own judgement in every thing, as she was certain that could be confided in.

You will pardon me for passing over most of the incidents that occurred during my residence in Liverpool, except those which relate to the Glanvile family, the Brummell's, on any matter in which I was immediately concerned: to introduce you to the crowd that visited at our house, would be tiring both of us, without answering any purpose whatever.

From Lady Glanvile I learned that her son was returned, though not at all in the health and spirits they expected: he pressed them to hasten to Mistlewood, for to him London never appeared so unentertaining; Lord Darnley, too, was equally solicitous, for the day of *their* departure was fixed for *his* marriage.

They were all to spend some time in Wales, when Lucy was to conduct her
sister

sister home, where his lordship's family were to meet them with a party of friends. Charles had half promised to accompany them ; but Mr. Glanvile, though he approved of the connexion, wished to be with his father after so long an absence ; more particularly as he was soon to take possession of the Shropshire estate.

I tried to think of the pleasant part of her letter, and to rejoice at my good fortune in having escaped seeing Mr. Glanvile, as, under an appearance of dejection, I should have found him doubly dangerous.

Emma and her father continued to improve upon each other : he lost so much of that austerity he used to display, that she no longer thought giving up the time to him a task which duty imposed, but began to derive pleasure from seeing that she contributed to his enjoyments.

I hinted to her that now was the propitious moment, which, if lost, could not be recalled : and added, I should venture to tell Lady Glanvile she could not do better than send Charles an ambassador in his

own cause. She wondered at my temerity, but bade me do as I liked. By this time the new-married pair, with their suite, had left Mistlewood, and were partaking of the festivities of Farnham Hall, one of Lord Darnley's family seats: Charles accompanied them thither, but was at liberty to quit the party whenever he pleased. His indulgent mother soon communicated my intelligence: you will readily believe he was not backward in presenting himself to me.

I introduced him to Mrs. Belton, who overwhelmed him with her civilities; and would hardly permit me to take him to Mr. Brummell's, till he assured her he brought letters from both his sisters for their friend, who would chide him for his delay.

Emma was alone when we were announced; her agitation at our *entrée* was excessive: the letters, however, relieved her from some part of her embarrassment, by reminding her of the many friends she had to enquire after. Mr. Brummell then came in, who gave the gentleman as warm
a re-

a reception as we could have wished; he indeed pressed him to make his house his home while he stayed, and hoped his visit would be of some continuance. This my pupil (as he styled himself) very prudently declined, saying, he had an old college companion, who had lately been appointed to one of the livings in the town, whom he had come purposely to see, and who, before he would part with him had made him promise to become his guest.

This was a part of the story I had not yet heard, though I was pleased to find every thing concurred so much to our satisfaction, and congratulated myself in having the power of contributing to the happiness of those to whom I owed so much.

Mrs. Brummell had now been dead more than six months; Mr. Brummell, therefore, began to resume his usual habits of giving dinners, &c. To shew attention to Sir Henry's son, he was very profuse in his entertainments, and spoke so highly of both himself and his family, his acquaintance vied with each other who should

should invite him ofteneft to their houfes, till Charles at laft faid he muft run away, for his constitution would not bear this excefs of good living.

We had before projected a party to Buxton and Matlock, partly for my friend Mrs. Belton's health, and partly for amufement. In the month of September 177—, we fet out a formidable party for the firft-mentioned place, our beau being particularly asked by Mr. Brummell to attend us there.

At a watering-place in the courfe of a week you become more intimate with the fame people, than in a city you would be in a year, particularly when under the fame roof, as is the cafe at Buxton.

I faw with 'fincere pleafure, how very neceffary our lover made himfelf to the father of his miftrefs, and how much more like a rational being Mr. Brummell acted fince he had fuffered himfelf to be domefticated among us: his own acquaintance remarked the change, and prefumed he was looking out for another wife. Emma often told me, ſhe was fure her father had
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such an intention, and she verily believed I was the person in his eye. I treated this surmise with the ridicule I thought it merited : for had I believed there was the least foundation for it, I must have drawn back in the work I was so eager to accomplish—the union of two persons so deservedly dear to me.

Fearing that in the groupe of visitors, the baths, and the company of Buxton at this season attracts, there should be some young man of fashion who might think it worth while to dangle after Emma, and dazzle her father by his titles and fancied importance, I urged Charles to unfold his purposes with firmness, and to trust to Providence for the issue. His reception, considering the prejudices he had to combat, was by no means unfavourable ; though his sanguine disposition led him to think *all* must be lost because every thing was not acceded to instantly.

Mr. Brummell, as I expected, communicated to me the substance of the conversation ; owned he had entertained higher views for his daughter, though at
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the same time he did justice to the gentleman's merit, and the respectability of his family.—“Confess my good Sir,” said I, laughing, “you had a desire to call a *lord* your son-in-law, though it is not likely that Emma will ever arrive to the honor of being *my lady*, if she marries the Rev. Mr. Glanville; yet I do not despair of one day seeng *him* decorated with lawn sleeves, and on the bench of bishops.” This fally did the cause more good than any arguments, however sensible, could have done; Mr. Brummell, that very evening, axpressed a wish to hear from Sir Henry on the subject.

The acknowledgments I received were doubly gratifying, as I was conscious of having practised no arts to gain an ascendancy on the mind of Mr. Brummell; on the contrary, I had endeavoured to make his daughter think more highly of him, than from his conduct to her mother she was disposed to do.

Charles was half mad with joy, calling me a perfect Machiavel in petticoats. One
would

would have supposed, by his transports, all preliminaries were settled, and the wedding-day determined on,

While matters were in this train, I had the pleasure of hearing from Lady Darnley, that having at last got rid of her numerous visitors, herself, her lord, and Miss Glanville, proposed joining our party at Matlock the following week ; for they imagined we were by this time completely tired of the barren, sandy hills of Buxton. This was true enough ; but so entirely were we occupied with what was passing within doors, we had almost forgotten our first intention of removing, at the end of three weeks, to that enchanting place.

Mrs. Belton had received considerable benefit from bathing, and was disposed to do any thing we pleased : I believe the style in which Mr. Brummell travelled, added to the expectation of the elegant assemblage of friends we were so shortly to meet, contributed not a little to restoring her health, and to the perfect good-humour with which she entered into all our plans.

Before

Before we left Buxton, Sir Henry's letter to Mr. Brummell arrived, with a large packet from Lady Glanville for me. She said, that at first Sir Henry started the objections we expected, but that the recollection of the lady's intrinsic worth, and being informed of Charles's long attachment, he thought he could not do better than give them his benediction, and in the most explicit terms, declare to Mr. Brummell what he intended to do for *his* son, relying upon his affection for his daughter for making *her* fortune equivalent to what the world supposed him worth. She added, that while all her children appeared to have equal prospects of happiness, it pained her to the soul to see her eldest, and, she must own, darling son, plunged into a melancholy of the most alarming kind.

When pressed by Sir Henry to enter into active life, he knew not what to urge in his defence. The neighbours complained of his *hauteur* and stateliness; those who knew him before he went abroad, when his manners were so much
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the reverse of what they are now, attribute the change to his long residence on the continent, where, from having mixed with society of so superior a rank to themselves, he now found it difficult to unbend. Sir Henry, fearing Mistlewood might be too retired for him, since his sisters had left it, proposed going to Shropshire, not only for the purpose of taking possession of Comber Park, where he wished him to have an establishment becoming his eldest son, and the heir of his title, but in order to introduce him to the earl of B——'s family, who so much courted an alliance with him. Change of scene, and an intercourse with such respectable women as the daughters of this nobleman, added to the company who frequented their house, might make him throw off that reserve which repelled all the advances to intimacy of those with whom he had associated here. He conjured us to let him follow the bent of his own inclination, and expressed such an aversion to marriage, that we at last began to think it was the fear of the earl and his daughters that prevented him from going into their neighbourhood.

bourhood. Sir Henry has therefore, at my particular request, relinquished all idea, for the present, of accomplishing his favourite scheme ; and I hope the ladies, from their merit and beauty, will soon have offers superior, in the estimation of the world, to what our son would be. This may dazzle the father, and make him forget his original intention ; particularly when he finds Edward so indifferent, and so tardy in becoming his neighbour.

“ After we had promised all he wished,” continues Lady Glanville, “ and we hoped to have found him more placid, and less retired within himself, we were most grievously disappointed. Gratitude for our concessions made him cheerful for a day or two ; but alas ! he soon relapsed into his former strangeness. How to account for this surprising alteration I know not, unless it is by presuming, that during his absence he has formed some attachment unworthy of himself and family, which he dares not avow, and yet feels that he is bound by the laws of honor to fulfil his

engagement, even at the risk of forfeiting our esteem.

“ Would to Heaven ! my dear Caroline, you were here ; your influence over every one of us is great : though you have not had the same opportunity of studying his character as of the rest, yet I think your penetration might do a great deal, at least, I should have a friendly heart to unbosom myself to ; for I dare not communicate my suspicions to Sir Henry, nor could I to either of my children, if they were with me. I know I cannot ask you to come, but believe me I do not the less sincerely wish for your presence.”

You will judge of my sensations at reading this affecting epistle. Sometimes I accused myself of possessing the most consummate vanity in supposing it possible that attachment to *me* could be the cause of this derangement in Mr. Glanville ; yet every circumstance combined to convince me, that unworthy as I might deem myself of so ardent an affection, undoubtedly while I remained single, and he did not meet

meet with a person equally attractive in his eyes, there was little probability of his acting agreeably to the wishes of his family. Had I not wounded him to the quick in our last interview, by hinting an engagement, it was more than probable he would have addressed me from the Continent. On his return home, hearing of my future plans, he must either imagine I was deserted by my lover, or that I had practised some deception, in order to avoid a repetition of his offers; the impetuosity of his own temper would lead him, at all events, to conclude that he was wholly indifferent to me; mortified at this idea, he would doubtless strive to forget he had ever been the slave of so unworthy a passion; his efforts to accomplish this being ineffectual, might occasion that absence of mind, and capriciousness of conduct, so faithfully depicted by his over-anxious mother.

Women little know their own power when they suffer themselves to be easily won: opposition is the very food of love. You will do me the justice of believing I had no such intention in my conduct to

Mr. Glanville. No; at this period of time, when many of the loved companions of my youth are mouldered into dust, and I perhaps am not far distant from "that bourne, from whence no traveller e'er returns," I call God to witness, that my sole motive for resisting his reiterated offers arose from conceiving, that to accept them would be to shew myself unworthy of the friendship which, from my earliest years, Lady Glanville had expressed for me. Frequently had this amiable, interesting young man a powerful advocate within, which sometimes would be heard: but, thanks to Heaven! rectitude of principle always overpowered and stifled it.

I digress strangely: but you know "talking much" is the exclusive privilege of our sex; and in an old woman, relating the deeds of *her* times, it is doubly excusable.

You are now to consider Mr. Charles Glanville and Miss Brummell as arrived at the very summit of their wishes, having obtained the approbation of both their parents, and all matters relative to settlements,

ments, &c. perfectly understood by the friends on both sides. In this happy frame of mind did they leave Buxton for Matlock, where we were soon joined by our friends from Farnham Hall, reinforced by Lord George Selby, brother to the Duke of —, who had begged permission to make their *trio a partie quarrée*, and, as far as could be judged from appearances, was an humble admirer of Miss Glanville, who seemed not to treat him very scornfully.

In this sweet retreat we passed many delightful days. Maria, though Lady Darnley, was still my own Maria; and his lordship, as a husband, lost none of those bewitching attentions which, as a lover, he knew so well how to practise. Charles and he often rallied one another on the very narrow escape they had of being rivals, while Emma owned few women would have borne, with the patience she did, the affront his lordship put upon her, in preferring her friend to herself. Mr. Brummell said all was for the best, and bade us recollect, that if any

person had a right to be offended it should be him, who had submitted to have his favourite with crossed ; and he hoped we should all feel grateful for it, by shewing him we were worthy of the compliance he had made. Emma looked at me very significantly, and whispered, she was sure *my* gratitude would be put to a very severe test, unless I had no objection to becoming her mother in law. I chid her for her levity, though I own I began to think there was some truth in what she said.

Among the number of people we met at Matlock, there was one gentleman whom I must not pass unnoticed. This was Captain Wentworth, a post-captain in the navy.

He had just returned from a three years' station in the West Indies, where he had buried a most affectionate, valuable wife, who had left four daughters to bemoan her loss. This lady was related to Mr. Brummell, and had brought the captain a handsome fortune, which was settled upon her children, three of whom were born in England, and left at home
with

with their relations; the fourth was a little Creole, her mother having borne it on their first going to Jamaica. Being still in deep mourning, and not in high health, there was a tincture of pleasing melancholy in his countenance, originally a very fine one, though it had suffered from the ravages of the climate he had lately left, that interested me much.

Whenever I found our own party too elated with their own happy prospects to admit of so *sombre* a guest as myself, I stole out unperceived, to indulge my reflections on the banks of the Derwent, whose crystal stream gurgling by me, soothed me to peace, while I lamented the untimely fate of the unfortunate earl whose name it bore.

In some of these solitary rambles I met with Captain Wentworth, in whose conversation I ever acquired information relating to history, on the events of our own times, delivered in such nervous language, and with so much perspicuity, that I wondered how a man of his profession had found leisure to attain. I understood he

meant to pass the next winter in Liverpool. There being no rumour of war, he wished to recruit his strength by staying some time in his native country; and as his children were with their mother's relations in Lancashire, he could have more frequent opportunities of seeing them, by his station in Liverpool, than at any other place. I suppose at this time he was not far from forty.

CHAP. X.

“Strange it is that our bloods, of colour, weight, and heat, pour’d all together, would quite confound distinction, yet stand off in differences so mighty.”

SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN the party were to separate, Mrs. Belton was most unfortunately attacked by the gout in one of her feet, and could not move. Lady Darnley, her sister, and his lordship, were engaged to pay a visit to his father, which could not be postponed. Charles, too, was sent for, to take possession of the living Sir Henry had always intended for him, the old incumbent being now dead. Mr. Brummell was pressed by business to return home, though neither himself nor Emma liked the idea of leaving me alone. However, after all the company had deserted us, even Captain Wentworth, Mr. Brummell received a summons he was under the necessity of complying with. Then it was that your

friend had an open declaration of his affection, with a *carte blanche* of all he possessed.

In this unlooked-for situation I knew not how to act, though a determined rejection was my only resource ; yet in doing this I feared lest Charles and Emma might suffer ; for the apparent change in his conduct might proceed from a desire to please me, as a mistress ; destroy that illusion, and perhaps his harshness would return. Much as I loved my friends, my own reputation was still dearer to me. To prevaricate would lower myself, not only in my own eyes, but to those who knew not that there was any hidden spring to actuate me ; I therefore, with firmness, told him I never could be his, though I should ever consider myself as highly honoured by his attention, and wished I might at any period of my life have it in my power to shew my gratitude for the kindness I had received from him and every part of his family. He seemed mortified, though he endeavoured to conceal it, and left me with precipitation, saying

ing something which I did not well understand.

I disclosed the purport of his visit instantly to Emma, and advised her on no account to remain with us, as she at first thought of doing, for I conceived it to be of the utmost consequence to herself, her being with her father; for in his present humour I feared he was angry enough to take some resolution to her prejudice, by way of revenge, as he knew that would be the most effectual way of wounding me.

As soon as they were gone, I told the story to Mrs. Belton, who seemed to think me very rash in my refusal: I might never again have such an offer—a member of parliament, with my own carriage, and many other pretty things, were not to be met with every day, without chick or child (to use her own expression) or any incumbrance; for as Emma was so shortly to be married, I should not have her to plague me: she really did not think I had been such a fool. I bore this in silence, knowing that, to a woman who could ar-

gue in this strain, all I had to urge in extenuation of my *folly* would be of little avail. For the first time in my life I experienced that I was *dependent*. In what light could I view the settlement made upon me by Mrs. Belton, but that in quitting her protection, though she might not have a right to resume her gift, undoubtedly it would be my duty to restore it to her?

With these ideas strongly impressed on my mind, without a sympathising friend into whose bosom I could pour my griefs, and by that means deprive them of half their bitterness, did I retire to my chamber, but not to rest. When I did close, my dreams terrified me to death. I saw Lady Glanville, with terror in her countenance, pursuing me, and demanding her son, while Mr. Brummell stood by with a malicious sneer, enjoying my distress. Then Emma, weeping with dishevelled hair, haunted me, asking me where I had conveyed her beloved Charles. At last these figures vanished, and Maria, surrounded by a groupe of children, with
her

her usual benignity and loveliness beckoned me to follow her, and we should all yet be happy. At this I awoke; and though not at all refreshed by sleep, determined to rise, and try what fresh air and exercise would do.

The sun had just risen, the dews were yet fresh on the grass, the birds were carolling their thanks in the sweetest notes imaginable; all nature seemed renovated but myself. Listless and undetermined whither to bend my steps, in taking my glove from the dressing-table, where I had laid it the preceding night, I found a letter, addressed, in a female hand, "To Miss Williams," which was altogether unknown to me.

The first impulse was to let it remain: but I soon checked this. Perhaps, thought I, it is from some child of misfortune, who thinks *mine* a most enviable state, and takes this mode of soliciting my notice. "If it be," said I, breaking the seal, "whatever is in my power shall be done, and this very morning will I seek thee out." What was my consternation, when I recognized

cognized the well known characters of Mr. Glanville ! It ran thus :

“ Think not, Miss Williams, thus always to avoid me. You *shall* see me—I will be heard. Though despised and contemned by you, your dominion over me is as absolute as ever. I know you rise early ; I shall count the moments, in Adam and Eve’s Walk, from six to eight o’clock to-morrow morning, in the hope of meeting you there : but remember, if you do *not* come, the name of Glanville will open Mrs. Belton’s door, and, if you prefer it, all I have to tell you shall be said in her presence.

“ Your devoted, though injured,

“ EDWARD GLANVILLE.

“ *Thursday Evening.*”

Your gentle heart will bleed for the distress that overpowered mine at this moment. To meet Mr. Glanville clandestinely ! who—I, that had with so much caution avoided him, perhaps by this one deviation forfeit Lady Glanville’s esteem, and realize the dreadful vision which still
haunted

haunted my imagination? And yet what was to be done?

It was evident from the manner in which the letter was conveyed, that he had corrupted the fidelity of those around me. From them he would learn that I knew of his being in the neighbourhood, or the letter would be there *unopened*. How did I repent of my fatal curiosity! To write to him was impossible; for how was I to tell which of the servants he had bribed, and what name and character he had assumed. To suffer him to enter in his own, after what had passed yesterday, with the determination which his words implied, would be to subject myself to new mortifications, and possibly compel me to quit Mrs. Belton; for her confined notions would set me down for a mad woman, if, on the following day, I should refuse a still better proposal than that of the last, which had exasperated her so much.

With an aching heart, then, did I go towards my favourite spot. The little urchin, who ferried me over, said he supposed he should soon lose me, too, for almost

most all his customers were gone : but he hoped we should come again next year. Before I could make any reply, he landed me, and put off, saying he would be within hearing on the other side, when I wanted him.

It was now after six. As I went on, I perceived a gentleman, with folded arms, at the extremity of the walk, looking towards the Hall, the house we inhabited. It struck me this must be Mr. Glanville, at least I hoped so ; for if it was a stranger, he must witness our interview.

When I came nearer, the sound of my feet made him start. He turned. It was himself ! “ God of Heaven ! ” he exclaimed ; “ it is—it is Caroline ! ”

I gave him my hand, and with a voice hardly articulate demanded if we met as friends.

“ Speak thus,” said he, “ and I hope all will yet be well.”

“ But consider, Mr. Glanville, to what you have subjected me ! Perhaps we are observed. Know you not that the fair fame of a woman must not be sullied, even
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in thought? And what representation will be put upon this meeting, avowedly an appointed one?"

"Am I then always to be sacrificed to forms? Surely, after so long a separation, something is due to friendship; for never can I expect to make you feel any pity for the pangs I endure from a passion that will terminate but with my existence."

While he spoke, I had leisure to examine his figure. What fire—what expression was there in his eyes! The unfledged student was now become the polished gentleman. His features were convulsed; the agitation of mind visible in his countenance would have inspired pity in the most insensible being. Think what I endured at that moment! Ah, Miss Middleton! one must have experienced similar anguish to form an adequate idea of what my sufferings were.

Summoning all my resolution, I firmly told him his reproaches stung me not, being conscious that they were unmerited. As the son of the woman in the world I most venerated, and whose happiness I prized

prized far beyond my own, he was entitled to my respect and gratitude ; as such, I should ever recognize him, and, if he pleased, would receive him in Mrs. Belton's apartment that afternoon, where I should be disposed to hear every thing he had to say, and to comply with any requisition consistent with my honour to grant. Though extremely irritated, he knew not what objection to form to my leaving him, as of my own accord I appointed so early an hour for his seeing me ; and if the interview was spoken of, there could be no improper construction placed upon it by those who, from the malevolence of their natures, might in the present instance have ample field for animadversion.

It was then agreed that I should tell Mrs. Belton he had been some time from Mistlewood, on an excursion, and not being far from Derbyshire, had come to see Chatsworth, the Peak, and its curiosities. Having no particular pursuit, he had wandered to Matlock, with the hope of meeting Lady Darnley and her suite.

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On his arrival, hearing they had left it, he naturally inquired for his sister elect, to whom he wished to be introduced, and was also told that none of the party but ourselves remained. Using the privilege, therefore, of an old acquaintance, he had called to inquire after my health, and to learn from me whither his connexions were gone. Mrs. Belton, however, was not to be told that I had seen him previous to his visit at her house, otherwise her suspicious nature might construe into something like design his coming to Matlock, at the moment we were left alone. They might have been awakened with much less reason; for it seems Mr. Glanville had his emissaries, who informed him of the departure of Lord Darnley, &c. and the probability of our remaining even after Mr. and Miss Brummell. Not knowing the reception he might meet with from me, made him anxious to avoid those who, though they did not know him now, would recognize him at a future interview. After his having yielded so far, I durst not request any thing farther than
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that he would go out of the way while I took my passage across the river.

With what eagerness did I endeavour to regain my chamber, dreading every person I should meet might suspect something extraordinary had led me out! though at other times, from no motive whatever, excepting that of enjoying the fragrancy of the morning, I had taken many a solitary ramble, without imagining that any one would notice me. How is it, my friend, that the guilty disturber of our peace works securely in the very presence of those they are labouring to destroy, while a mind unaccustomed to deceit, if it be compelled to do violence to the rigid precepts it has been taught to look upon as sacred, dreads a discovery every moment, and imagines that instant annihilation must follow detection.

In this state did I pay my respects to Mrs. Belton. She was unusually kind, and appeared to have forgotten the anger with which she bade me go from her the preceding night, and the cause which excited it. This wrought so much upon me,
that

that I forgave all she had said, imputing it to the violence of her disorder, which, I had been told, always soured her for the time it lasted; and on that account most of her friends kept out of the way till the fit was nearly gone off.

We breakfasted together, and I began to read to her. From the tone of my voice, a more judicious observer would have easily discovered that I had had something to derange me. Indeed so completely were my nerves unstrung, it was with difficulty I could hold the book in my hand. The curtain screened me from observation; and so little attention was paid to the subject, I might have omitted whole passages without its being remarked. We were in this state when the servant announced Mr. Glanville.—“What can have brought him so soon?” said Mrs. Belton. “He will be disappointed at not finding Emma here. Well, go to him, my dear: do not let me be disturbed till I ring my bell, for I am disposed to sleep.”

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This mistake with regard to the brothers was particularly fortunate; for in spite of all propensity to slumber, had Mrs. Belton known it was the elder one, her curiosity would have been so awakened respecting his business at Matlock, his appearance, &c. &c. that I must very soon have returned to give her the wished-for information.

Though this meeting was deprived of half the terrors of the last, yet there required no small share of spirits to enable me to go through it properly. I had given my word that I would hear all Mr. Glanville had to say: could I answer for myself that his arguments might not weaken my resolution, and win me over to his own side? His unwearied attachment, proof even against the belief of my being partial to another—would all this weigh as nothing in his favour, when urged too in the most persuasive language? I durst not go on, for the fear of exasperating him by my absence.

When I entered the room he was looking over my music, which was opportune enough,

enough, as it afforded some subject for conversation, and took off the solemnity of his first approach.

"And now, Sir," said I, "the culprit before you wishes to be told the crimes she has been guilty of?"

"Ah, Caroline!" said he, hastily, "you know too well the pleasure I feel in being thus permitted to converse with you, to think I shall waste moments so precious, and so ardently longed for, in fruitless recrimination. Only one question let me ask, and tell me truly—surely you do not mean to marry that old dotard Brummell?"

"Learn to treat a worthy character with more respect, Sir. Mr. Brummell, as the father of your intended sister-in-law, and of *my* friend, deserves not such an appellation from either you or me!"

"Torture me not with your nice distinctions," exclaimed he, almost choaked with passion; "or by Heaven——"

"Nay, Sir, you now furnish me with weapons against yourself. I came here prepared to answer calmly any queries you might think proper to put; if, however,
you

you act in this inconsistent manner, our conference is at an end."

My heart bled when I perceived how this strain of speaking convulsed him.

"O God! this is too much!" striking his hand on his forehead; "this prevarication is dreadful."

"If it convinces you that I will never marry Mr. Brummell, and that I have already told him so, it is strictly conformable to truth."

This recalled his scattered senses. Falling upon his knees, he seized both my hands, while imprinting a kiss on them, a tear of anguish stole from his cheek. I felt the drop as if it had pierced my heart in twain. This silent monitor operated more powerfully than all his vehement expressions. Bursting into tears, I attempted to break from him, but he forcibly detained me, saying, "Ungenerous girl! would you forsake me now, at the moment when my sufferings have melted your obdurate nature so far as to awaken pity! Are you anxious to conquer the sentiment, and to case yourself again in that
impe-

impenetrable coldness with which you have hitherto been surrounded."

I felt that this was the crisis of my fate : I was now to prove myself worthy of Lady Glanville's instructions and kindness, or to forfeit her esteem for ever.

" You little know me, Mr. Glanville, if you deem this heart a *cold ungrateful* one. Ask your mother, Charles, your sisters, Emma Brummell, if *they* have ever found it so ? On the contrary, have I not, at all risks, served them to the utmost of my ability ? and some of them would have sighed in vain for the happy prospects that now await them, had it not been for me."

" All—all is true. To me alone are you unjust."

" And why am I so, but because you ask me to plant thorns in the bosom of her who taught me how to think ? In return for unexampled kindness, to be guilty of the basest ingratitude, and besides, to sully my own name with merited reproach, to be the scorn of those who now honour me with the most unbounded affection ? Can *you*, who have a natural love

of virtue implanted in you, wish me to become this wretch? Depend upon it, when the hour of cool reflection banishes these idle chimeras, you would join in contemning *her* whom your wild intreaties had prevailed on to commit an indiscretion that could never be forgiven or repaired."

Letting go my hand, he threw himself on a chair, as if exhausted by the poignancy of his own reflections. After a short pause—

"Tell me, Caroline, why is it, that in wishing to unite myself to such worth and loveliness, I am guilty of a crime, when, if you had chanced to be some titled blockhead's daughter, though devoid of every quality that now attracts me to you, all would be deemed right by a misjudging world?"

"Your own good sense will answer that question much better than I can, Mr. Glanville: but as *my* obscurity of birth and dependent situation have placed insurmountable bars betwixt us, for pity's sake leave me to my fate, and do not, I beseech you, by an unavailing pursuit, embitter

embitter the few comforts that my unprotected state permits me to enjoy. Seek a partner in your own rank in life ; there are many families who would be proud of your alliance. One, you know, has made overtures, which ought not to have been rejected in the manner they were. Suffer yourself to be introduced into the Earl of B's family ; his daughters are amiable, well-educated women, and have lived too reclusely to imbibe the dissipated ideas of high life. In doing this, you will gratify your father, and take from your beloved mother the only anxiety which she at present feels ; in the end, I trust I shall receive even your own thanks for this advice."

" This sounds good doctrine in theory, my sweet monitress : but the artificial glare which your eloquence throws around it does not glance on the injustice I should be guilty of, in offering my *hand* where I could not also tender my *heart*. Call it the romance of youth, or what you please, but surely a passion that has stood the test of so many years absence, without a ray of
1 2 hope

hope to feed on, on the contrary, even taught to believe that the object that excited it preferred another—believe you that such a flame can be easily extinguished? No; I maintain it, twice in one's life it is utterly impossible to be so attached. If I must relinquish the hope of obtaining your hand, a life of celibacy is my determination. Surely that choice is left me. Charles will marry, and perpetuate the family name; with me, ambition is extinct. Perhaps had I heard of you no more, after quitting this country, I might have overcome a youthful attachment, and it is possible, in the gay scenes in which I was engaged, lost the recollection of what I once hoped to obtain. Every individual of my family seemed, however, to conspire against me, all spoke of you in terms of friendship and obligation; and scarce a letter from my mother or sister but related some incident in which you were a party. On my arrival, this was continued. Maria, sweet girl! I believe loves you almost better than she does her mother. Nothing but her marriage, she says, could have

have reconciled her to your leaving the family. Charles attributes all his success in his proposals to Mr. Brummell, from having been under your guidance, consequently his gratitude leads him to dwell on the correctness of your judgment, and the warmth with which you interest yourself for those whom you regard. Judge if, in the midst of all this, I did not feel somewhat elated at having so early distinguished your merit. Hearing no tidings of a lover, when they delineated your present situation and prospects, was a convincing proof that what you said before I went abroad, on this subject, was merely an artifice to deaden my ardour. Your disinterestedness raised you still higher in my esteem, and I determined once more to throw myself at your feet, not doubting the consent of my own family, if yours could first be obtained. I left Mistlewood without saying more than that I was going to take an excursion, and might probably come on to Matlock; though I secretly wished that, before I reached the place, my sisters should have quitted it. Staying at

Buxton a day or two, I fell in with a party who had just left this place. A lady that had seen you here was inquiring after Mrs. Belton, when instantly, as *news*, they mentioned *your* intended marriage with Mr. Brummell. It was talked of as a piece of great good fortune ; for they added, though you were so much in favour with your relation now, it might not be of long continuance ; she was so capricious and cross, and when you were no longer to be considered as a visitor, you would soon experience a change in her behaviour. This intelligence wounded me to the soul ; I was enraged both at you and Brummell ; then the recollection of the unpleasantness of your home led me to extenuate what at first appeared unpardonable. When I came here, I told my servant, who is faithful and not inquisitive, I wished to get a letter conveyed to a lady at the hall, and he must scrape acquaintance with the chambermaid, or somebody who could assist him. He soon accomplished this point ; and fearing you might not open any note with my hand-writing
on

on the outside, desired him to let the girl direct it. To avoid a possibility of his betraying me, I dispatched him to Bakewell last night, where I said, I should be this evening; for I vainly flattered myself I should have your permission for asking my father's consent, (of my mother's there can no doubt be entertained) or be told you were engaged to marry Mr. Brummell; in either case this day would suffice for my stay. You have relieved me by saying, there is no foundation for the report of your marriage: but what does that assurance avail me, when your severity towards myself still continues."

"Believe me, Mr. Glanville, I am not insensible to your merits, and if I possessed the power, be assured you would soon receive the most unequivocal proofs that this is not merely assertion. As it is, I am more inclined to admit the soundness of your reasoning than I believe I ought; I will therefore no longer press you to enter into engagements that are repugnant to your feelings, though, I hope, time may

work a revolution in your sentiments, that at present you are not aware of: remember, however, this is to be our last interview, and we must each of us try to forget that the other is in existence. Consider that our sex are, by nature and education, so inured to disappointment, we do not so much shew that keen sensibility under suffering as men, yet the pain is less transitory, and the wound lies deeper. Do not, therefore, render the attempt to close it abortive; for in spite of all solicitation, even that of your mother, whose will has hitherto been sacred with me, *I never can be yours.*"

"My doom is then irrevocable, at the only moment that hope ever dawned upon me." This was uttered as an ejaculation, and without casting a look at me: I took advantage of that pause to break from him, for I could support myself no longer. The sternness of my words but ill corresponded with the feelings of my heart, that overflowed with tenderness; all its sluices were open; I could have clasped my lover to my bosom, with the assurance,
that

that he reigned absolute master there, and that the whole study of my life should be to promote his happiness.

I congratulated myself on my escape, when I found I was alone in my own chamber, for I hardly knew how I had reached it. I trembled at the risk I had run; and when I recollected some of my own expressions, I thanked Heaven that Mr. Glanville was a man of such strict honour, and of so unsuspecting a nature; for many might have construed my behaviour into a refinement of art, and cherished hopes in consequence, that it was so much my desire, for my own peace of mind, should be crushed for ever.

At one moment I repented of my inflexibility, believing that the Almighty would not have permitted a mutual passion to have been excited, but with a view to the happiness of his creatures. I then reprobated the distinctions of family; and repining at my hard fate, wished that Edward Glanville had been the son of a cottager, that together we might have tended the flock and tilled the ground. One

gleam of recollection made me despise my own weakness for entertaining sentiments so unworthy of the pupil of Lady Glanville.

Mr. Glanville, I believe, was not less agitated than myself. I heard him walking with hasty step, to and fro the room where I had left him : The silence which afterwards ensued, while I knew he was not gone, alarmed me more than his quickness ; but to make any inquiry respecting him was impossible ; thus was I compelled to keep my chamber till the following letter was brought me, and I heard he was set out.

CHAP. XI.

"I will be gone; my being here it is that holds thee hence. Although the air of Paradise did fan the house, and angels offic'd all, I will be gone."

SHAKESPEARE.

"To Miss Williams."

"WHILE I yet linger on the spot which contains all my soul holds dear, permit me most adored of women, to express the effusions of a heart, which must cease to beat ere it can swerve from the allegiance it has vowed to thee! Do not, I beseech you, throw the scroll away with disdain, from the fear of its containing any request improper for you to grant; believe me however presumptuous my hopes once were, they now no longer exist.

"While I thought you cold and insensible vanity suggested, that by unwearied attention, and a vigorous pursuit, this might be converted into love. Could you once

be disposed to think favourably of my suit, all your objections might be overcome. The conversation of this day, which will live in my remembrance to the latest hour of my life, has dispelled these flattering illusions. I felt that I was not indifferent to you ; I saw your gentle bosom torn by emotions almost equal to my own ; truth flashed upon me ; and I have the strongest conviction that this passion was not the work of a day.

“ In the midst of this sweet assurance, (which will solace me in the solitude I go to take possession of) the airy structure fancy had framed, vanished from my sight. The woman who could, on such critical occasions, act with so much cool inflexibility, though in opposition to her own wishes, at an age when the current of the affections will hardly be restrained, would not, after having conquered so often, ever be prevailed upon to deviate from what she conceived to be the path of rectitude, and the only one consistent with her duty to follow.

“ While

“ While your severity bids me despair, veneration is thus added to the other sentiments that I have so long entertained for you, it is a refinement in cruelty, binding me in irrevocable chains at the very moment when you say I must endeavour to forget there is such a person in existence. If I could accuse you of insensibility, my pride might be wounded ; or had you ever afforded me the smallest particle of hope to feed upon, I might rail at the inconstancy and capriciousness of the sex, and thus reconcile myself to my fate ; but, all lovely and amiable as you are, it is impossible to think of you but with the most bitter regret, and to feel the separation from such worth as a deprivation of happiness not to be borne. Pardon my incoherencies, for in truth, I know not what I say ; my aim is to express the profound respect which your conduct has inspired, and to assure you that this is the last time your peace shall be invaded by me.

“ Would to God I had always been able to gain this mastery over myself ! at
this

this moment my mother would not have been deprived of the society of her faithful friend, at a time when she needed it most, as her children are so soon to quit her; neither would you have to experience the whims and caprices of a woman who is not worthy of calling you her relation.

“ Most bitterly do I feel that to avoid me has been the motive that governed you in relinquishing the protection of my mother. Do not, I intreat you, sacrifice yourself to a point of honour; continue with Mrs. Belton no longer than while she treats you with kindness. Acting as you do from the purest principles, despise the censures of the weak and injudicious; remember my mother *is*, and *will always be* your friend. If I thought it necessary to raise you still higher in her estimation, I would declare to her what she is yet ignorant of; but this proof is not wanting, and I dread, in doing it, to give her maternal bosom many pangs on my account, which without this disclosure she will be spared.

“ Why

“ Why is it that I delay bidding you an eternal adieu ! My heart is congealed at the thought ; my sensations resemble those who are on the verge of eternity—though hope is fled, yet the frail sinner clings to the joys of this life with more avidity than ever. While my trembling hand will perform its office, permit me to assure you that I shall ever be your unalterable and devoted friend,

“ EDWARD GLANVILLE.”

The perusal of this epistle, you will believe, did not tend to dry up my tears; it afforded me, however, the only consolation that the present state of matters could admit of. Mr. Glanville did not despise me for my weakness; on the contrary, the discovering it had exalted me in his opinion, and he determined from henceforth to leave me to my fate. I was freed from his importunities; and though at the moment when he took such a resolution, he considered the forming another attachment not within the bounds
of

of possibility, yet time might work a change, and make him entertain other sentiments.


At such an interesting period, to be without the consolations derived from the sympathy of friendship, added poignancy to my sorrows.

Less than ever was I disposed to relish the conversation of Mrs. Belton. When I mentioned that it was the elder Mr. Glanville, and not Charles, who had called, she asked so many questions about him I scarce knew how to answer her. It was fortunate for me that we had planned what she was to be told, or I am confident she would have suspected something from my embarrassment. Though I knew not whether he was going, I ventured to say, he intended visiting his estate in Shropshire, and was uncertain when he would return to Mistlewood. Her regret at not being able to pay him a proper degree of respect was often expressed : so tiresome did she grow, I was forced to plead a violent headache as an excuse for absenting myself from her company.

With

With how much willingness should I have relinquished all claim to her future favours, provided I could, with any propriety, have released myself from the obligations she had already conferred: even the society of Emma I should soon lose; deprived of that, Mrs. Belton's house would be a desert. Much as I had strove to love this lady, even when she appeared in the most amiable light, I had ever found my heart closed against her; and now that I penetrated into her real character, and saw that she had not a spark of affection for any being on earth but as it contributed to her own amusement or comfort, I felt a repugnance to living always with her that seemed unconquerable.

In this unpleasant manner did the time pass, till she was well enough to return to Liverpool. From Emma's letters I could form no conclusion respecting her father's future intentions with regard to herself and Charles, though she was much distressed at the fear of his former harshness returning, he had been so gloomy since they left Matlock. I did not like the idea of
meeting



meeting Mr. Brummell myself, though I determined to behave to him with the same ease and good-humour as before his declaration. I requested Mrs. Belton, with the utmost earnestness, never to hint to him what I had told her of his proposals, lamenting most sincerely at the same time that I had given her this mark of confidence ; indeed my motive for doing so, arose from a fear that she might hear of them from some other person, and I considered that it was better I should tell the tale than any one else.

Though Emma came frequently to us, Mr. Brummell avoided being one of the party as often as possible. I endeavoured to make him forget any circumstance had occurred to lessen our intimacy, though I carefully avoided all approach to those unreserved conversations we used formerly to hold.

Sir Henry and Lady Glanville both joined at this time in inviting Mr. Brummell and his daughter to pass a month with them at Mistlewood, with a view, no doubt,, of aranging matters previous
to

to the marriage. The invitation being accepted, the ceremony was performed there without any parade, all parties having an aversion to a public celebration; my company alone was requested, which for very obvious reasons I could not give.

While I thus lived, as it were, in a state of abstraction from all those enjoyments which from my earliest years I had been taught to prize, and till now had never experienced the want of, I was roused one forenoon, that Mrs. Belton and I were taking our usual airing, at observing a gentleman in a post-chaise that was passing had ordered the driver to stop, and was bowing very respectfully to us through the window.

Mrs. Belton desired me to pull the check string, wondering at the same time who it could be. At this remark I discerned the countenance of Captain Wentworth. He paid his compliments with the most engaging politeness, felicitating himself in having thus early met with ladies, in the cultivation of whose acquaintance he had promised himself so much

much pleasure. Looking to Mrs. Belton, he requested her permission to wait upon us at her house: this was instantly granted, and she expressed herself equally happy at this unexpected meeting.

It afforded subjects for conversation on our return home, to conjecture where the captain had been since we saw him, whether he still meant to spend the winter in Liverpool, &c. &c. ; for, to a mind so little stored as Mrs. Belton's, such an incident was a prodigious relief. Though she fancied she received amusement from my reading, it was all ideal, for in half an hour after I had ceased, if I ventured to speak of the subject of our studies, I found her wholly unacquainted with it: in a little while I gave up ever hinting such a thing, for fear of offending her by exposing her ignorance, though I really believe she did not consider this want of retention as any imputation upon her understanding, but imputed it to a treacherous memory, which she said she had from a child.

Captain Wentworth called upon us the next day, when I was glad to observe his health

health so visibly improved since we parted at Matlock. Mrs. Belton pressed him to visit us often, and to shew she was in earnest, invited him to dine the following day: in short, in a few days he became quite domesticated in our family, Mrs. Belton expressing her astonishment if a day passed without our seeing him.

In this gentleman's society I ever experienced satisfaction and improvement. Though gentle to a degree in his manners, he was never led to sacrifice sincerity at the shrine of politeness; when we differed in opinion, he told me his reasons for doing so without any reserve, and I frequently was compelled to yield to his better judgment, while I felt more gratified at owning his superiority, than if I had myself come off conqueror.

Emma, full of her own happiness, had little leisure to bestow on me, though I heard, with sincere pleasure, of the generosity of her father, and how much he appeared to be satisfied with the connexion she had formed; indeed, every one of the family seemed to outvie each other in their
atten-

attentions to him. All were assembled at Mistlewood, excepting Mr. Glanville, who, they feared, was determined to shun society; for though he had, pursuant to his father's desire, gone to Comber Park, he lived there wholly recluse, letting the neighbours understand, they could not offend him more than by attempting to break in upon his retirement. This strange resolution, Emma added, gave Lady Glanville real uneasiness, though she affected not to notice it to Sir Henry or any other person. Lord George Selby having now become the declared lover of Miss Glanville, before the close of the winter the marriage would be celebrated; this I very soon learnt from the lady herself, who never lost sight of the situation I had formerly held in her father's family.

From the correspondence between the sisters and myself, I derived much satisfaction. Their affection and gratitude were the strongest proofs of my having endeavoured to implant proper principles in them. The soil was truly a good one, or I might have met a very different return, though I had bestowed equal pains.

It

It was well for me at this time that I did not depend on the objects around me for amusement, and that I could also command my temper so far as not to appear dissatisfied with them. On all occasions did Mrs. Belton remind me of the superior rank in life I now held to what I had ever done before. The littleness of her mind, and contracted notions, made her not feel that this language was at all improper, though any other person would have deemed it insulting. She took care, however, to treat me with infinite respect before strangers, and whenever it was practicable, without consulting times or seasons, talked of *my* friends the Glanvilles. This was in order to enhance her own consequence, *my* gratification was little attended to in the recapitulation of these circumstances.

When Emma was my neighbour, I enjoyed so much of her society, and besides was so interested in promoting the success of Charles's attachment and hers, I had not leisure to reflect on the uncomplaisableness of my own home. Now that all
my

my friends appeared to have arrived at the summit of their wishes, I was consequently no longer necessary to their happiness; in looking around me I felt myself an insulated being, without a hope of my condition being meliorated.

By a fatality which no mortal wisdom could foresee or prevent, those whom I loved dearer than my own existence, and of whose friendship I had received the most unequivocal proofs, were the people, of all others, whom it was my duty to shun, because along with them was associated the idea of one whom I had sworn to banish from my remembrance, and for whose peace of mind, as well as my own, it ought to be my study to avoid; yet if I became the visitor only of either of the families, there was a possibility of my meeting him, and perhaps of discovering what, for so many years, I had laboured to conceal.

Thus dead to all pleasurable sensations, my sensibilities were not so far blunted as to preclude me from feeling most keenly, the capriciousness of Mrs. Belton, and that I was truly the slave of her humours.

If

If I had known how to account to Lady Glanville for not making her house my home, in the event of quitting the protection of my relation, I should not have hesitated a single moment in sacrificing the advantages that were likely to result from my continuance, along with her deed of settlement, reserving only what literally was my own property, trusting to Providence for my procuring some situation where, by a proper application of my talents, I could render myself independent, and stand some chance for peace and quietness at home.

CHAP. XII.

" By the pattern of mine own thoughts, I cut out
the purity of his."

SHAKESPEARE.

IN this absence of all other comforts you will not be surprised that the attentions and conversation of Captain Wentworth were particularly gratifying.

When he spoke of his own situation, deprived of the society of a valuable wife, and left with four infants to rear, whose sex required the fostering care of a mother, my heart bled for him, and as objects of pity I commiserated the sweet innocents, thus left to the wide world at an age when the impressions they received would be lasting, and perhaps determine their future happiness or misery. I wished, in my solitary moments, it was in my power to take charge of their education, but this I could never hint to their father:
though

though I should disengage myself from Mrs. Belton, the proposal would betray such consummate vanity, as if I conceived myself more capable of giving them instruction than the persons whom their own relations might think proper to appoint for that purpose.

Mrs. Belton often called to see them in our rides, and sometimes the captain was with us. The solicitude I felt on their account was probably depicted in my countenance, for I had never been taught to dissimble. One afternoon, in particular, I observed Captain Wentworth so agitated, after gazing upon them and me, he was obliged to retire to the window, to conceal his emotions.

The youngest but one, Clara, who was all vivacity, and in general attracted a great portion of my attention, requested, with such earnestness, that I would take a walk in the garden, she wanted to shew me some of her flowers, that I could not refuse, particularly as Mrs. Belton was not averse to my going; her inability for walking confining her to her chair, the captain,

from politeness remained behind. We had not, however, walked far, before he joined us, to thank me, as he said, for my goodness in noticing his dear girls. I told him I received too much pleasure from their caresses, to allow that I was wholly disinterested in my attentions to them.

“ Could your benevolence, my dear Miss Williams, extend itself still farther, by permitting them to call *you* mother, what inestimable happiness would you confer upon them, and everlasting obligations upon me.” — It was well for me we were near the house, which precluded the necessity of making any reply to a request which, however unexpected, the least reflection convinced me had often “ hovered on the lips,” and for want of resolution to pronounce it, had as frequently been withheld. Any one but *our* companion would, during our return home, have discovered that something had happened to make us unusually pensive. I exerted myself in conversation as much as possible, but the captain’s absence of mind was very apparent; when he handed me out of the coach,

coach, and whispered in my ear, would I permit him to see me to-morrow morning, I was hardly less agitated than, by his trembling hand, I perceived him to be. Pleading a violent head-ache, as an excuse for not passing the evening as Mrs. Belton wished, he took his leave, and we sat down to a *tête-à-tête* as *stupid* as can be conceived.

I retired, as soon as I could with decency, to my own apartment, in order to consider the kind of reception I should give my lover.

For the first time in my life, I could think of marriage without repugnance. Had I selected a character whom I thought I could be willing to pass through life with, Captain Wentworth would have been the model I should have formed him from. Neither impetuous or phlegmatically cold, he was open to all the sensibilities of a tender friendship; and had no tendency to suspicious jealousy, the usual concomitant of an attachment excited by love alone. His affection for me must have originated from the opportunities he had of observing

my natural disposition; for with him Mrs. Belton was perfectly at her ease; and though before every other person she kept the reins on her temper, in his presence she frequently made me feel the galling yoke of dependence; once indeed I was compelled to quit the room, lest the starting tear, which her harshness excited, should have been noticed, and that the feelings of the *man* might lead him to lose sight of what he owed to *her*, as the person in whose house he was entertained.

In our former conversations the veneration he had expressed for the memory of his wife convinced me they had lived happily together; his tender care of his children, and his anxiety respecting their future welfare, which appeared to be his chief inducement for seeking an union with me, all tended to raise him in my estimation. On the other hand, could I answer for my own heart that it would never throb at the recollection of one who, if I were once become a wife, it would be criminal to think of. This was the only obstacle to my marriage; for by
this

this step every ray of hope must be banished from Mr. Glanville, and perhaps, on hearing of it, he might be restored to his family and the world, instead of leading a solitary, inactive life, such as he now did.

Was I certain, however, that reasons of this nature did not prompt me to listen to Captain Wentworth's suit, much more than a desire to promote the happiness of himself and family? and was it just, that so amiable and respectable a character should receive my hand from such unworthy motives.

From this recapitulation of my thoughts you will judge of the perturbed state of my mind during the night. Had Mr. Wentworth been without children, I should not have hesitated a moment in rejecting his addresses. The affection I already felt for them I did not doubt would increase, when they were once under my own immediate care and direction. The culture of their minds would occupy my leisure hours; their innocent endearments, as well as tracing the progress of their im-

provements, would leave no void in my heart. This conduct would conciliate the regard and esteem of their father more strongly than proofs of the most ardent affection. In finding that he had not appreciated my merit more highly than it deserved, I should experience no diminution of that respectful attention he had ever paid me since I was first introduced to him at Matlock.

The time at last arrived when it was necessary to open the inmost recesses of my heart to the man who, if he read nothing there to make him alter his sentiments, was in future to be my guide and protector.

Of an early attachment I spoke in the most explicit terms ; avowed that the object was still in existence, but so separated from me by insurmountable bars, that I retained no other remembrance of him save what we are supposed to feel for those of whose society the relentless dart of death had bereft us. If he felt jealous of this sentiment, which I owned I must ever cherish, it would be for the peace of both.

both that the proposed marriage should not take place ; and to shew the sense I had of his worth, I should continue to feel a lively interest for the happiness of his children, and as far as lay in my power overlook their education.

I also thought it necessary to apprise him how very much I depended on Mrs. Belton in pecuniary concerns ; and that I was confident if I did not sacrifice myself at the shrine of wealth, there was little probability of her bestowing a daughter's portion upon me, though she professed to the world that such were her intentions.

To relate minutely what followed this declaration of my sentiments is hardly possible, nor is it at all requisite : suffice it to say, that the conduct and conversation of Captain Wentworth made me almost adore him. I only feared I was unworthy of so noble and disinterested an attachment. I determined that it should be the study of my whole life to evince my gratitude ; and I prayed to Heaven that I might never have still nearer objects of affection to divide with me that heart which himself and

his lovely offspring had made their property for ever. In this wish I was gratified; nor can I believe their own mother, had she lived, could have loved them more tenderly. In every instance I sacrificed my interest to theirs, when I found an attention to both was impracticable; nor did I consider I was doing more than my duty required, from their father's generosity, and the unlimited confidence he placed in me, as well as his high opinion of my judgment.

Mrs Belton could frame no excuse for withholding her consent. She had spoken so frequently in praise of Captain Wentworth, it was impossible to retract her good opinion. Her surprise at my consenting to burden myself with the care of four children, all girls too, was pretty strongly expressed: but, she added, it was of no use giving her advice, as our sentiments were never the same. She took care to have my two hundred a year settled on myself, to which Captain Wentworth added, in case of his death, three hundred. She made us several presents, but gave
neither

neither any reason to believe that, at her decease we were to expect any thing further.

After my marriage was determined on, I communicated my intentions of altering my condition to Lady Glanville, Emma, and the other female branches of the family. I thought this incumbent on me, and apologized to her ladyship for failing to solicit her advice on this step as I had done on every other. As, however, from her never having seen Mr. Wentworth, it was but little in her power to decide on the propriety of the connexion I was so soon to form, Emma and Charles, I added, could estimate the companionable qualities; but to know the extent of the understanding and the intrinsic value of the man I was shortly to call my husband, would require no small degree of observation; which, from the unreserved intimacy of some months standing, I had had ample opportunity of making.

You are now to view me entering on a new scene—the wife of Captain Wentworth, with the approbation of all my

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friends;

friends ; and, what was of infinitely more importance, without having for a moment repented of my compliance.

After spending a little time with Mrs. Belton, we set out, with our whole family, to take up our residence at Clarmont, a seat which my husband inherited from his father. It was a retirement exactly suited to our taste, and the situation particularly desirable to me, as not being in the vicinity of any of the Glanville family or their connexions. The neighbourhood was genteel, though not overrun by immense proprietors, who are the bane of society ; adding *bouse* to *bouse* and *field* to *field*, without reflecting how many families are deprived of bread in order to contribute to their aggrandizement.

In this calm retreat I enjoyed real happiness, each day furnishing me with new proofs of my husband's goodness and unbounded affection. The children were every thing we could wish. Miss Wentworth had completed her ninth year, Alicia was seven, Clara five, and the little Emily two years and a half old. As far

as

as a judgment could be formed at so early an age, they appeared to have good capacities, and to be of docile dispositions. The servant who had gone abroad with the mother was continued in the service of the family by her master, while a widower; her attachment to the children gave both Mr. Wentworth and myself great pleasure, as, when we were from home, we were certain of proper attention being paid to their little wants and wishes, without a risk of their being complied with to their injury. Mrs. Belton's advice to me was to discharge this faithful creature instantly, as she would be a spy upon my conduct, and probably, too, from her kindness to the children, get an ascendancy over their minds, that when they grew up they might be induced to draw comparisons between what *I was*, and what their own mother *might have been*. I detested such littleness of mind, though I forebore to express my sentiments on the subject. Cautious, however, as I was, she never forgave me for retaining Langton in her post, and I believe was truly mortified

at

at her proving a most valuable acquisition to me.

From Lady Glanville I heard occasionally. She still spoke of the unaccountable melancholy of her eldest son, though she owned he was now much more with them than formerly, and appeared to make an effort to shake it off. As the rest of her family were well and happy, she must learn to be thankful, and consider this calamity as a dispensation from Heaven, lest she should be too much attached to this sublunary world. Emma was settled very near them. In her society she less felt the loss of her daughters, who, however, spent some part of every year with her.

This intelligence respecting Mr. Glanville pained me much. I had flattered myself that *my* marriage would have completely cured him. For my own part, I think I may venture to assert, that from the moment I determined to become the wife of Mr. Wentworth, I never thought of Mr. Glanville but with the affection of a sister. Often when I looked around me, and considered how peculiarly fortunate
my

my lot had been, I congratulated myself on never having given way to an attachment that could have been productive of nothing but misery.

Mr. Glanville's impetuosity of temper always terrified me. It was perhaps owing to a conviction that this could not be corrected, more than my own firmness, which enabled me to adhere to the line of conduct I had laid down as necessary for me to pursue. Emma, who never knew him till disappointment had laid her unrelenting hand upon him, and whose sympathy was ever awakened by misfortune, held an opinion diametrically opposite to mine. She was certain, that had I been less resolute, he would have made a valuable member of society, and been an ornament to his family. Had *my* connexions and fortune beet suitable to *his*, and we had married with the consent of *his* friends, I have no doubt that this might have been the case: but I own I could at no period of my life ever bring myself to think, with any degree of composure, on matches where there existed such a disparity in those points.

points. *My* ideas may be eccentric, and possibly erroneous; though I have always been of opinion, that if people were to consider these things more seriously, we should not hear of so many unhappy, ill-assorted marriages, nor of the frequent separations that unavoidably follow.

CHAP. XIII.

"But in this troublous time, what's to be done?
"Shall we go throw away our coats of steel,
"And wrap our bodies in black mourning gowns,
"Numb'ring our Ave Marias with our beads?
"Or shall we on the helmets of our foes
"Tell our devotion with revengeful arms?"

SHAKESPEARE.

FROM the peaceful serenity which we enjoyed we were awakened by the rumour of war. The civil commotions in America brought to my recollection how short lived all human enjoyments were.

That Mr. Wentworth, who idolized his king, should at such a season remain inactive, was not to be expected. Every time we entered into serious conversation, I dreaded being told that he was appointed to the command of a ship, and was shortly to leave me and the children. He saw my terrors, and kindly strove to alleviate them: but that was impossible.

The time at last came, when it was necessary for him to repair to town. The noble

noble lord then at the head of the Admiralty had shewn him much kindness, and he doubted not of soon receiving an appointment agreeable to his wishes. I concealed my emotions as well as I could, for my reason told me that his resolution was unalterable ; neither was it warrantable in me to make any attempt to dissuade him from pursuing the profession he had voluntarily embraced.

At his desire I accompanied him to the metropolis, taking along with us Miss Wentworth, who was now a tall girl of thirteen, and during our stay might receive instructions from masters of more eminence than our retired situation afforded. London had seldom any charms for me. At this time I entered it in a frame of mind not at all to be envied. The unabated kindness of Mr. Wentworth, and the satisfaction I enjoyed in his society and conversation, made me feel most acutely the loss I was so shortly to sustain.

I could not help considering the separation as a final one. I strove to combat the idea that took possession of my whole soul :

soul: it was not, however, to be resisted. Unhappily for me the *presentiment* was too soon realized! When he tore himself from me at Portsmouth, (whither I went at my own particular request) to embark for a climate that had been so fatal to him before, I believed I should never have strength to return to Clarmont. Without its master, it would be to me a desert. The recollection that *his* children were there, and that I had also vowed to cherish them as my own, roused me from this stupor of the mind. The weeping Charlotte threw herself into my arms; I pressed her to my heart, and determined to exert myself for her sake.

We immediately left a place that recalled to our minds the most painful ideas, and without going near the capital, rejoined the little groupe who had long been impatiently expecting our return. The next post brought me a letter. The wind had changed, by that means their sailing was protracted a day longer. All eager as they were to enter into action, their spirits could ill brook this delay. Ignorant as
every

every one on board the fleet was (the commodore excepted) of their real destination, each individual was anxious to display his courage ; there was a resolution and contempt of danger in this letter that even inspired *me*. I condemned my own weakness; and resolved to shew myself worthy of calling such a hero my husband.

In this fluctuating state of mind did I pass many months. The cultivation of the sweet girls' minds formed my chief employment, as well as amusement. I was amply rewarded for all my care by their affection and gratitude, added to the improvement which I daily discovered in them. The important charge I had to attend to at home was a sufficient plea for my declining to spend any time with the Glanville family, who were too distant for me to visit in any other manner.

I heard constantly from Mr. Wentworth, who was perpetually complaining of the inactivity in which both the navy and army were suffered to remain. His health, he said, was never better; though if it were possible for him to divest himself of
solicitude

solicitude for those distant objects so deservedly dear to him, the sorrow which pervaded his bosom at witnessing the calamities of civil war, where brother was opposed to brother, and the father armed against the child whom he expected to be the prop of his old age, was of itself sufficient to render his present situation truly comfortless. Anxiety for his family, however, superseded all other considerations; and when he recollected the harmony and peace which reigned at Clarmont, he thanked Heaven for the blessings conferred upon him, though for a time he should be deprived of the power of participating in them.

About a year after Mr. Wentworth left England, Mrs. Belton died. Her illness was so sudden, I had hardly been apprised of it two days when I heard she had breathed her last. I was then requested to be present at the opening of the will. Though I expected no bequest, it was a tribute due to her memory to attend the summons.

Mr.

Mr. Brummell met me at her house, and asked if I could inform him whether there was any other person likely to be interested in it, whose attendance could be obtained.

"None but Mr. Belton's brother's family," I replied; "for surely my relation must have remembered them!"

He shook his head, as if doubting that she had repaired the injustice of her husband, but, at my desire, sent a note to the widow, requesting that herself and eldest son would meet us the next morning at the house of the deceased, for the purpose already mentioned.

This young man, in opposition to the inclinations of his friends, had embraced the profession of physic, and with much difficulty had found funds to support himself at college. Having gone through a course of studies, he had taken his degree at Edinburgh with much *eclat*, and being too youthful to settle as a practitioner, was looking out for the situation of travelling tutor to some young man of fashion;
not

not only with a view of gaining medical and other knowledge by a visit to the continent, but from a conviction that his mother's finances could support him no longer. During my residence in Liverpool I had occasionally seen this youth, and shewed him every mark of kindness and attention in my power; at the same time endeavoured to impress Mrs. Belton with favourable sentiments towards him. Though she always appeared to turn a deaf ear to my recitals of the worth and goodness of her sister-in-law, and the humble poverty and neatness which reigned in her dwelling, I have, however, the satisfaction of believing that they made some impression on her mind, and that I was the instrument, in the hand of Providence, of making her restore to her husband's family the property to which they were so justly entitled.

When the will was opened, we found, excepting two thousand pounds to me, a thousand to each of her executors, and some trifling legacies to servants, &c. Robert Belton was left residuary legatee, and
likely

likely to possess upwards of twenty thousand pounds.

Never shall I forget the expression of the mother's countenance! Even Mr. Brummell was affected. The beloved son flew to her support, and caught her lifeless in his arms. On her recovery, she wildly asked if it was *her son* that Mrs. Belton had done so nobly by? I assured her it was; at the same time requested her to be calm, and to consider, that if *she* did not share his fortune, of how little value would he think it! I knew enough of their history to be convinced that these would be exactly the young man's feelings; for this valuable mother had done too much for her son not to make him prize her most highly.

When recovered from the confusion which this little incident had occasioned, every person present expressed their surprise at my calmness, all having imagined that the bulk of my relation's fortune would have been left to me. I told them that, on the contrary, I had not expected so considerable a legacy, as I knew she
did

did not approve of my marriage with Mr. Wentworth; and I always hoped she would, by her last act, repair the injustice she had hitherto been guilty of towards an innocent family, to whom such a gift would be so truly acceptable. My forbearance and generous sentiments were extolled far beyond their real value. Mr. Brummell said he knew I formerly cared little for money, but he thought by this time I might have had reason to alter my opinion. In order to put a stop to the conversation, I offered to attend Mrs. Belton home, leaving the gentlemen to arrange matters as they pleased. Mr. Brummell being one of the executors, and the nearest relation to the deceased excepting myself and Dr. Belton, all power was vested in him.

The happiness we diffused in the family circle of Mrs. Belton, by the intelligence we communicated, must have been witnessed to be adequately felt.

Contentment and piety had long been inmates of this peaceful habitation, yet anxiety for the future would obtrude upon

its worthy mistress in spite of herself. Her husband had been very unsuccessful in his outset in life; he became a bankrupt, but with so fair a character, every one of his neighbours vied with each other in enabling him to begin the world anew. He was doing tolerable well when his brother died, and he saw his family were deprived of what he considered their due, as there were no children of his brother to succeed to his property. This disappointment brought on a fever, which soon put an end to his life. Mrs. Belton found herself with six children, the eldest boy scarcely fourteen, deprived of a beloved husband, and without any certainty of provision.

In this exigence she consulted those friends who had supported her husband in his distresses; they offered both money and credit, proposing to her to continue the business for her son; and if she felt herself unequal to conducting it alone, they advised her to give the head clerk a small share of the profits, in order to insure his fidelity. For the sake of her children she readily entered into the plan
sketched

sketched out by them, and acquitted herself in her new situation beyond their most sanguine expectations.

Conceive the bitterness of her disappointment, when she discovered in her son an invincible aversion to trade. He was too young to be informed of the reasons that had induced her to enter into so busy a scene: but the moment he saw her wishes and his were not the same, he resolved to relinquish his own. This she generously would not permit; and at the hazard of disobliging her kind friends sent him to the university, and, while there, strained every nerve to enable him to make an appearance equal to his fellow-students, while he, on his part, practised the most rigid economy, as well as exemplary diligence, being the only return then in his power to make; inwardly determining, that should he ever possess the means, and his mother not be living, he would restore to his sisters the sums expended on his education. Alas! little did he know that the profession he had chosen was of all others the least likely to prove lucrative till the zest of life is gone.

This unexpected bequest gave him ability as well as inclination to evince his gratitude, yet it did not engender indolence. He still determined to exercise the healing art, and without further delay to pursue his original intention of going to the continent, having now the power of visiting it in whatever character he chose to assume. His mother had lost two children since the death of her husband ; her second son, now nineteen, filled the place she had intended for Robert ; the others were daughters, both grown up, who were a great comfort to her, and, by their brother's good fortune, were likely to be distinguished beyond the very circumscribed circle to which their mother's prudence had hitherto thought it necessary to confine them.

On such a family having experienced so fortunate a change, who could but rejoice ? The timid, modest Belton, no longer contending with adverse circumstances, and fearing that he should never be able to repay his mother's kindness, had now the unspeakable happiness of smoothing her decline

decline of life, and of calming those fears for her girls which, notwithstanding the consolations of religion, of which she possessed an abundant share, she could not help sometimes expressing.

When I have been inclined to repine at the ill success of modest merit, while its counterfeit makes its way through the world in spite of all obstacles, I have recalled to my remembrance the goodness of Providence in thus rewarding *humble virtue* in the persons of Mrs. Belton and her children. But how many families are there, of equal worth, who struggle through life unregarded and unseen, whose little histories of self-denial would make those weep who might reflect, that *one fourth* of what *they* spend in idle gratifications would have spared many a bitter tear and sorrowful pang!

If it were not for the recollection of that better world to which we are all hastening, how could the calamities of human nature be supported!

CHAP. XIV.

"My grief lies all within ; and these external manners of laments are merely shadows to the unseen grief that swells with silence the tortured soul—*there* lies the substance."

SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN I returned home, and took a retrospect of the last few years of my life, I accused myself for my want of gratitude to my relation Mrs. Belton.

Death draws a curtain over all foibles ; we remember marks of kindness, and proofs of regard, when the traces of anger and asperity fade away. What constitutes *our* happiness we naturally imagine will contribute to that of others. The acquisition of riches *she* considered as the *sovereign good* ; *I* had been taught to think differently ; *she* was, however, no more to be blamed for the impressions received in early life from those who had had the care of her, than *I* was to be praised for *not* imbibing what I constantly heard condemned.

demned. Any other young woman but myself might have found a residence in her house less irksome than I did: the comparisons which I could not help drawing between my former protectress and herself, few could have had the power of making; besides, with my mind so occupied by other objects, I might have been guilty of inattentions of which I was ignorant; the reproofs which I received from her were probably, then, excited by marks of neglect, of which, at the time, I was unconscious. The adulation that her wealth had for years procured from most of those who were her constant associates she certainly never received from me: I knew myself to be in the right, but she could not view my conduct through any eyes save her own; and the homage she was accustomed to from persons who were independent, she most likely expected in a two-fold degree from one who, according to her ideas, was merely the creature of her bounty.

In naming Mr. Wentworth's proposals to her, I had certainly no intention of

being guided by her opinion. At the time I did not think this mode of proceeding wrong, as from her earnestness to see me well established, and mistress of a fine house, carriages, &c. I considered I was only following my own plan instead of hers; and mine I was pretty confident to be the most rational, as well as most likely to insure happiness. This want of deference to her judgement was most probably discoverable in my manners, and without doubt she was disgusted by it. How sincerely did I lament that I had had no opportunity during her last illness of testifying that I was not altogether insensible of the obligations she had conferred upon me.

In this frame of mind I was little fitted to peruse a most pathetic letter from Lady Glanville, informing me that her son Mr. Glanville was now with her in a very alarming state of health. The physicians, imagining his lungs to be affected, had recommended a sea-voyage and a milder climate; Sir Henry and herself, with Charles and Emma, were therefore preparing to accompany him to Naples, as soon

soon as they had determined on the medical friend who should attend them there. Young Belton had been mentioned as one who would willingly accept such an offer, and whose skill was far above his years; from my connexion with the family she thought I could give the best information respecting him, and therefore requested an immediate answer.

Pained to the soul at this recital, I instantly sent an express to Belton, relating the circumstance, and earnestly requesting him to forego his own gratifications rather than not to comply with the proposal now made. I knew the connexion might be of considerable service to him, but I feared at such a season, on a common recommendation, he would not have found leisure or inclination to embrace it. I also replied to Lady Glanville, acquainting her with what I had done, and impressing her with as favourable an opinion of the young physician as I thought he merited.

At this trying period of my life it was truly fortunate that I had no person in the house with me who had the privilege of

breaking in upon my hours of retirement. When alone, most dearly did I pay for the tranquility I assumed in the presence of my young folks.

One evening that I was sitting contemplating the calm serenity of the sky, and the moon's silver beams, which were playing in the stream that meandered through the grounds, I lost all recollection of where I was. Mistlewood, dear scene of youthful pleasures, Italy, America, all passed in review before me: though in the presence of my children I burst into tears, giving full scope to the bitterness of the reflections which then occupied my whole soul. They flew to me; Emily, with the simplicity peculiar to her age, begged I would not cry, for papa said he would come again, and she was sure he would keep his promise. The rest were silent, neither could I utter a word, clasping them by turns to my bosom; in their embraces I thought but of their father and his unceasing tenderness.

Soon after this, I received the most pleasing letters from my husband, who had

had fought nobly, and conquered without receiving a single wound. The whizzing of the cannon-balls was then in my ears : I trembled at the possibility that at the very moment I was perusing those assurances of his safety, *that* destined to lay *him* low, was now on its way.

While a prey to such agonizing reflections, you will wonder how I supported my own health. For the sake of the amiable girls, whom I had promised to cherish as my own, I endeavoured to forget my sorrows : the hope of presenting them to their father at his return, worthy of his fondest affections, stimulated me to new exertions ; had he lived to trace their improvements, how acceptable to my heart would his commendations and thanks have been.

From Italy I had every thing to depress me. Mr. Glanville was visibly declining. Emma had now become my correspondent, her ladyship being too much affected to permit her to write. Belton, I found, did great credit to my recommendation, and had gained such an

ascendancy over the mind of his patient he could scarce exist without him; indeed, the whole party were pleased with his gentle, unassuming manners. They were continually changing their place of residence, without travelling much, for that Mr. Glanville could not bear, except by water, and their excursions on that element were pretty frequent. She added, that if it were possible to forget the cause that carried them to that delightful spot, and his inestimable value, their time would pass most pleasantly; but as that continually reveted to their remembrance, there was something of mournful melancholy in all the schemes of amusement into which they entered.

Mr. Wentworth's letters still breathed the most tender solicitude for my health. I could see the feelings of the man of rigid honour, and those of the affectionate husband and father, contending for the mastery; the latter prompted him to wish to return to England, while the former very forcibly detained him on the theatre where glory and victory seemed at last to await the British arms.

A letter

A letter from Belton, dated at Nice, informing me that all hope of Mr. Glanville's recovery had now vanished, served to bewilder my imagination, and to teach me that the measure of my sorrows was not yet full. Another dated on board ship, saying, that the family were embarked, and would shortly be in England, when he should take the liberty of paying his respects to me at Clarmont, convinced me that the awful change had taken place.

What could have supported me at this trying moment save the consciousness of having performed my duty? Had it been possible for me to reproach myself for any part of my conduct towards this ill-fated, but truly amiable young man, I should have sunk under the bitterness of the grief which overwhelmed me. All I could now hope was, that the secret of his attachment had gone to the grave with him; or, at least, that his angelic mother had not been made acquainted with it. I anxiously wished for the arrival of Belton, yet dreaded seeing him: the terrific moment came!—His sable habit, and still more the

the expressive look which he wore, struck me to the soul. I have killed him, thought I ; if it had not been for me, he might have been well and happy, the pride and comfort of his family ! Belton seemed to read what passed within ;—" I have undertaken, madam," said he, " an office to which I feel myself unequal ; cannot you divine what I have to communicate." Summoning all my resolution, I told him, I supposed the companion of my youth had even in death not forgotten me. " Heaven knows he did not ! This packet will explain what I cannot. When time has mellowed our griefs, we will mingle our tears together for the untimely fate of one of the most amiable and deserving of his sex,"—He seemed anxious to fly, lest a reproach against me should escape him ; recollecting himself, he presented the letter which he had kept in his hand, and taking a casket out of his pocket placed it on the table, then, bowing respectfully, silently withdrew. I had sufficient strength to deposit both in a place of safety before I fell senseless on the floor.

On


On recovering I found myself on a sofa with my children weeping around me, and the faithful Langton using every means to restore me to life. I requested to be put to bed, and begged to be kept quiet, for I had been attacked by a sudden fit of illness, and knew not how it would end. The joy they all expressed at hearing the sound of my voice was a cordial to my heart.

When the physician came he pronounced me in a high fever, and little sensible as I was supposed to be, I could hear him inquiring if any unexpected incident had occurred to occasion my complaints, which were too alarming to have come on so rapidly as they described without some cause, which did not appear to be known.

A good constitution with skilful medical assistance, added to kind and affectionate nurses, (for my two elder girls never left me) baffled the violence of my disorder; but the weakness which remained after I was deemed to be in a state of convalescence, made me think most seriously of the charge I had undertaken, and what was to become of my daughters during
their

their father's absence, if they were also bereft of *my* fostering care : this consideration induced me to try to preserve a life which on their account was so valuable.

In communing with my own heart, and perusing the sacred volume, I learned the folly of giving way to unavailing regrets. "Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months *are* with *thee* ; *thou* hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass ;"—these words spoke comfort to my troubled soul, and shewed me the sinfulness of repining at the immutable decrees of the Almighty.



CHAP. XV.

“ Though their father die, yet they are as though
he were not dead ; for he hath left one behind
him that is like himself.”

Job.

IN the midst of the general triumph which pervaded all ranks of people on the news of the gallant Rodney's memorable victory on the 12th of April, *my* domestic circle was not a little enlivened at the prospect then opened to the public, of returning peace.

Mr. Wentworth, before this auspicious day, had been fortunate enough to conciliate the regard of his brave admiral in a most eminent degree, that when it had been proposed by others to send him home with dispatches of importance to government, the superior in command chose to delegate the commission to another, that he might not (to use his own words) lose his support in the day of battle, nor his conversation in the hour of relaxation.

On

On this day of danger my poor Wentworth atchieved deeds of valour that excited the admiration of enemies as well as countrymen. Perceiving the ship of his gallant friend exposed to the heat of battle, and that the French seemed bent on its destruction, he bore down with such impetuosity to his aid, as at once to break the line of the enemy, and instead of permitting them to indulge a hope of conquest, led them to consult their own safety. While thus performing his duty, his arm was shattered by a cannon-ball, though he did not quit the command of his vessel till he saw the colours of that he had been engaging struck down, and the British standard planted by his own sailors in its stead. When the heat of the engagement was over, and they had time to attend to the calls of humanity, it was thought necessary to remove the wounded where they could have the benefit of free air.

At the house of one of the principal people in the island of Jamaica, Mr. Wentworth was received with that kindness and hospitality which is in vain sought for in a country

country like England, where every attention is to be purchased. The good lady, who was the head of the family, had known him when he was first in the West Indies, and had not forgotten some trifling services which he then rendered her; these she most abundantly repaid, and displayed so much sincere good-will in her attendance on him that a by-stander would have imagined one of her nearest relations had been her patient. Owing to her goodness he was soon able to write me an account of his situation, and to say, that whenever his strength admitted of his removing on board ship, he should embark for England along with other of his brother officers; who, like him, found a trip to their native country absolutely necessary for restoring their health.

These communications, you will believe, awakened a variety of emotions. The hope held out of a speedy re-union of the colonies with the mother country soon proving illusive, I suffered myself to place very little reliance on a meeting with my husband. Though he had been compelled to
undergo

undergo the amputation of his left arm, in consequence of the wound already mentioned, I found it was his full determination to return to his post as soon as the object of his voyage should be in any degree accomplished. The certainty, therefore, that this visit to his family would be a very transient one, made me think but little of the probability of its taking place at all. When I understood that himself and his companions had pitched upon the *Ville de Paris* to transport them to Britain, my fears for its safety became excessive. Alas ! too soon for all concerned, was verified the sad presentiment which, in spite of all my efforts to the contrary, constantly invaded my thoughts.

All was gaiety and alacrity ; parties were forming in the metropolis, and even in distant counties, to go to Portsmouth to view the largest and most valuable ship of the French navy a prize in a British harbour ; every bosom glowed with laudable pride at the idea.

While thus agitated by hope and fear you will not imagine I could remain quietly
at

at home. Leaving Clara and Emily under the charge of a valuable neighbour, myself and my two eldest daughters repaired to the house of Mr. Ellison, a relation of Mr. Wentworth's, who resided in Hampshire, at no great distance from Gosport. Here we were freed from the bustle of a seaport in time of war, and heard, almost hourly, what was passing in it. How many times were we on the brink of expectation; frequently was it asserted that the *Ville de Paris* had been seen on the coast; the event proved that all such reports originated with those who ardently wished them to be well-founded.

By several ships I received duplicates of letters written just on the point of sailing, the perusal of which were as the ghosts of departed pleasures, or like that sudden gleam which illumines the horizon when the dark clouds, rolled upon each other, seem to portend ruin to all beneath their influence. After the most sanguine among us had relinquished the expectation of seeing the missing ships safe in harbour, still the possibility that some part of the
crews

crews might be saved, was a forlorn hope on which every one who had relations or friends on board delighted to build.

Though I held but one opinion, to please my friends and alleviate the sorrows of my daughters, I suffered myself, in *their* presence, to appear to yield to the arguments which were offered in support of this probability. I however determined on returning home, for the crowd of company that frequented Mr. Ellison's house did not at all accord with the state of my mind. Good Mrs. Ellison herself did not oppose this step; she saw the restraint I was under when in the presence of strangers, and was certain that to check the torrent of my grief would perhaps tend the more to make it pass the bounds of reason.

With what different sensations did we return to Clarmont from those which animated us when we left it. You have seen me bending under the weight of severe afflictions, and been told the means I used to subdue and mitigate their bitterness. This then is the inestimable value of the consolations to be derived from religion,
that

that the more frequent the application, the more freely do they flow to the sincere believer. What loss could exceed mine, except that of having, along with a beloved husband, been bereft of the means of subsistence !

To have had a perfect idea of the intrinsic value of the man thus consigned to a watery grave, it was necessary to have stood in the same relation to him that I did. His character you have often heard most highly extolled by those who knew him only in public life ; when I add, that in private his virtues shone forth still more exemplarily, I have paid him no higher a tribute than what is most justly due to his memory, and the impressions which his goodness has left in my heart, in characters too indelible to be ever erased.

The trying situation I was placed in by the death of my husband most women would have shrunk from. Though the affection I had imbibed for his daughters made me consider them as my own, yet when the tie that bound them to me was severed, there was no telling the light
in

in which they might view me. My having educated them myself, had given them no opportunity of forming acquaintances that had not first received my sanction ; they also looked up to me, not only as the promoter of their happiness, but as the source from whence all their stores of knowledge were derived. These things were in favour of their wishing to continue under my protection. On the other hand, the retirement I had bred them up in, and the likelihood of my pursuing the same mode of living, might make them desirous of entering into a world which, to youthful imaginations, offers so many allurements.

At this season, when the consolations of friendship were more than ever necessary, to prevent me from sinking under the weight of the various perplexities with which I was surrounded, my beloved Emma, with that warmth of heart which ever characterised her, left her family without even apprising me of her intention, in order to mingle her tears with mine, and to shew there was still many blessings within my reach, if I would but exert myself, and call
reason

reason to my assistance. To her prudence and good counsels I owed much; for in truth I was incapable of judging what was proper to be done.

Before Mr. Wentworth's departure, he made his will, a copy of which he gave me sealed up. On the outside was stated the lawyer's name in whose hands the original was placed, and a memorandum that both were registered in Doctors Commons. This excellent friend had received instructions from her husband how to act; therefore, finding the death to be too strongly confirmed to admit of any doubt, she sent for Mr. Ellison, Mr. Caldwell (the lawyer), and Mr. Glanville. I was, on their arrival, necessarily plunged into business which prevented that stupor which otherwise might have been dangerous to my health. Mr. Wentworth's share of the prizes being considerable, letters of administration were immediately taken out in my name.

Mr. Caldwell was the only person who knew the manner in which Mr. Wentworth had disposed of his property. To this cir-

cumstance I impute the profound respect with which he treated me, from his first coming to Clarmont; as I had, in the course of my acquaintance with him, strong reasons for believing, that however virtue, when united with wealth, might command his attention, as an attendant on indigent obscurity it would have passed unnoticed.

Whether Mr. Wentworth, from the observations he had made on my character, was convinced I should never make a second marriage, and was also certain that I should consider the interests of his children as inseperable from my own—at the same time, that if they were left entirely independent, they would no longer look upon me as their own mother--I cannot pretend to determine; though without doubt, by his extreme liberality and high opinion of my principles, manifested by his last will and testament, he bound me to them by the most indissoluble ties; yet had he left less in my power, I might have been spared many an anxious thought, and some trying scenes, which at one time had almost made me forswear “the busy hum of men.”

The

The monies invested in the stocks were to be divided into five equal portions, the interest arising from which sums was to be paid me for my own use and that of the Miss Wentworth's. When they came of age, they were to have the privilege of selling out if they chose; and, provided my consent was first obtained, they could do it at eighteen. Whatever ready money he might die possessed of was to be paid to me, to be laid out in purchasing lands, or in the funds, as I thought proper. At my decease, this property might be devised to whoever I judged most deserving of such a mark of my regard: The house and grounds of Clarmont were mine for life. Afterwards they became the joint property of the Miss Wentworths. The plate, furniture, carriages, horses, and stock of every kind, were wholly mine. The entire management of the young ladies' education, as well as fortune, devolved altogether upon me; should they be so unfortunate as to be deprived of my protection (these were the precise words of Mr. Wentworth) before they attained

to years of discretion, he requested that Mr. Ellifon and Mr. Caldwell would become their guardians. Each of these gentlemen had two hundred pounds and rings bequeathed them. They were also requested to assist me with their advice on every occasion, when I thought it necessary to consult any person besides my own immediate connexions.

What affectionate attention and unbounded confidence, blended with the most refined delicacy! No reference to a second marriage, no change in the disposition of his fortune, should such an event take place; and to avoid the possibility of Mr. Ellifon, or Mr. Caldwell, giving me any trouble by their interference with my plans, their advice was not to be given without sollicitation, and unless I thought them more competent than my own friends—for relations he knew I had none. Must I not have been something less than woman, if I had ever lost sight of the obligations conferred upon me by this invaluable and ever to be regretted husband? To have called another by that endearing

endearing appellation would have been the most effectual way of proving I was unworthy of the first.

I do not recollect whether I mentioned before, that the first Mrs. Wentworth's fortune was settled upon her daughters. This amounted to ten thousand pounds. The interest of this, added to what they drew from the funds, made their income a hundred and eighty pounds a year each; which, considering the moderate ideas I had endeavoured to instil, rendered them quite independent. They were not old enough to judge of their father's will; all they knew was, that they were to continue to live with me; and at that time I believe they would have felt no misfortune equal to a separation.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

ERRATA TO THE FIRST VOLUME.

Page 20, line 18, for orderly, *read* elderly.

Page 57, line 22, *insert* a between (had) and (great).

Page 70, line 2, *dele* of.

Page 122, line 4, *dele* to.

Page 228, line 14, for *revert*, *read* revert.

Page 239, line 1, for *tbs*, *read* the.

Page 240, line 26, for *was read* were.